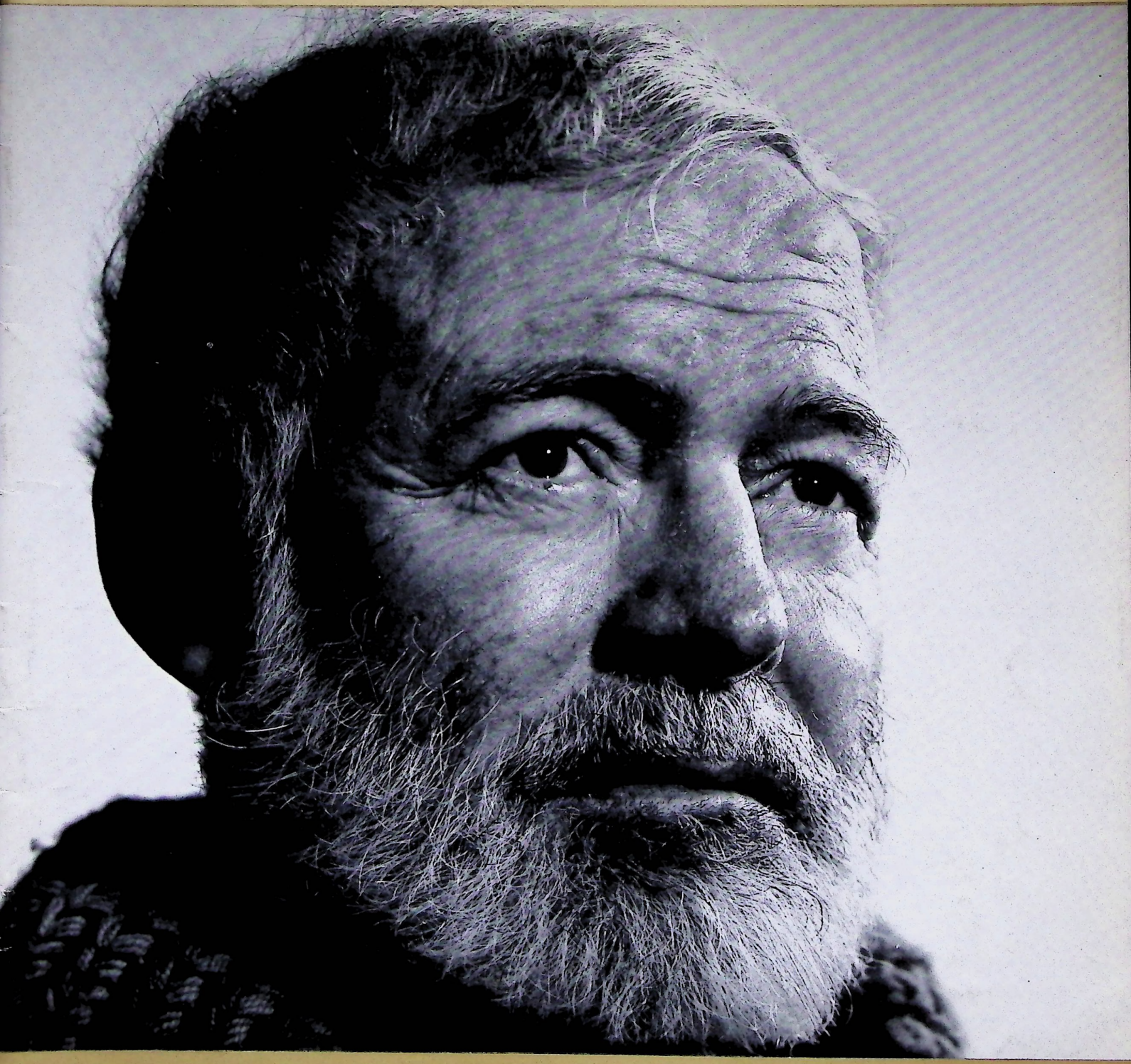
WISDOM

THE MAGAZINE OF KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATION



NOVELIST ERNEST HEMINGWAY

Portrait by Karsh of Ottawa

IN THIS ISSUE

HEMINGWAY AND THE AMERICAN NOVEL

AND OTHER TIMELESS ARTICLES MAGNIFICENTLY ILLUSTRATED

TWENTY-SIXTH ISSUE

TWO DOLLARS

WISDOM

THE MAGAZINE OF KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATION

LEON GUTTERMAN
EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

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BETTY-JANE PEYER, *Editorial Director*
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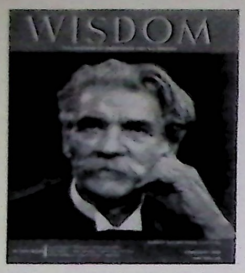

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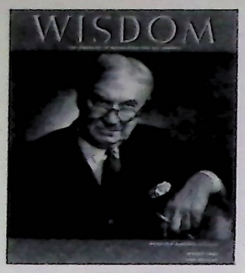

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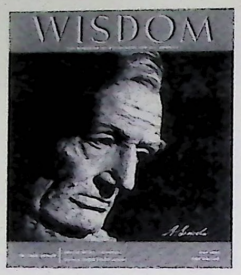

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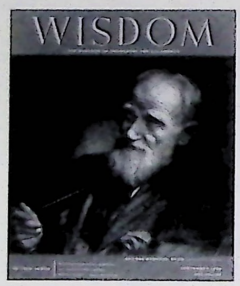

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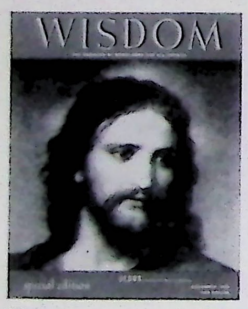

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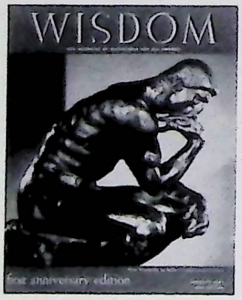

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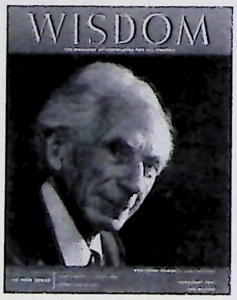

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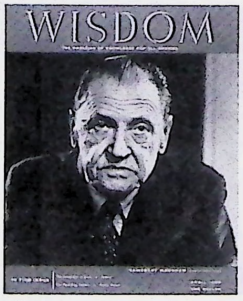

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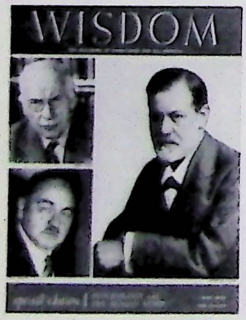

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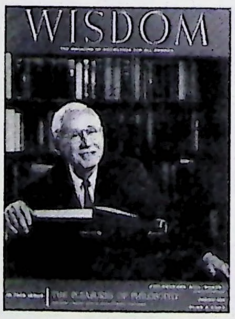

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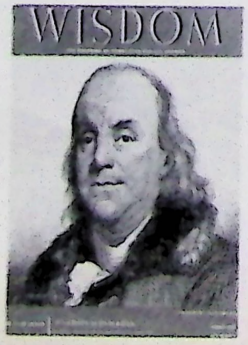

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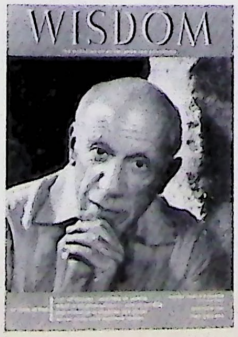

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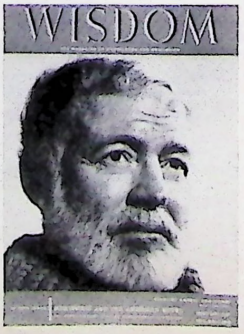

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To lack wisdom is no disgrace.
To lack the desire for wisdom is a pity.
But to desire wisdom and not know how to find it is a tragedy.

A LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

LEON GUTTERMAN, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

THE FINEST PIECE OF MECHANISM in all the universe is the brain of man. In this complex structure, with its millions of connecting cells, we can form images of the world. To retain these images, to compare them, to infer relations of cause and effect and to transfer thought into action is man's privilege. In proportion to the exactness of these operations is the soundness, the value of the man.

The wise man protects his brain, and the mind, which is its manipulator, from all that would do harm. Ignorance is a vice—a form of self-inflicted injury that leaves its mark of weakness on the brain. Ignorance means brain decay. Wisdom has a stimulating influence on the brain. It helps to lift us above ourselves, our petty individual aims, our narrow and selfish desires. The pursuit of wisdom is at once a humbling and ennobling work—humbling, because it is so little we individually can accomplish within the narrow limits of our brief and passing life; but ennobling, because every earnest seeker after wisdom enters into communion with the great intellectual fellowship of all time. If man will but open his mind to the genius and spirit of the world's great ideas, he will feel himself inspired with the purest and noblest thoughts that have ever animated the spirit of humanity.

In WISDOM MAGAZINE you learn to read with a purpose—and you read the best. That is to say, you read that from which you can carry away something that enlarges the range of your knowledge, sets your mind working, and quickens your powers of thinking and feeling—something far more important than mere transient amusement. With WISDOM MAGAZINE before your eyes, knowledge is increased. Thought is set in motion. The worth of a book or magazine is measured by what you can carry away from it. And that depends also on the spirit in which you read. Apply your intellect to WISDOM, read it with enthusiasm and pleasure, and you will extract more benefit from it.

It is not the quantity of reading that counts, but the quality and the intensity of thought that are evoked. WISDOM MAGAZINE teaches you how to economize time in reading as in everything else. The adage that Time is Money falls far short of the truth where WISDOM MAGAZINE is concerned. Time is worth more than money because by its wise employment more wisdom can be secured than money can purchase. What is needed today is fewer worthless books, magazines, and newspapers, and less reading that deadens the mind —but more thinking. Reading is easy, and thinking is hard work, but the one is useless without the other.

The reading which counts is the reading which, in making a man think, stirs and exercises and polishes the edge of his mind. The end of reading is not to possess knowledge as a man possesses dollars in his wallet, but to make knowledge a part of ourselves, that is, to turn knowledge into thought, as the food we eat is turned into the life-giving and nerve-nourishing blood. It is to have a mind so stored and equipped that it shall be to each man his kingdom, of which no one can deprive him.

Devote some of your spare time regularly to WISDOM MAGAZINE. Turn to it for change and refreshment of spirit. You will find that it will be a constant spring of pleasure, a delightful occupation in solitude, a distraction from worries, even a consolation in misfortune. You will rise to true nobility as you catch the spark of pure intellectual love, that love of knowledge for its own sake, which lifts us out of self into fellowship with those inspired men and women in all ages, whose lives have been, and will be, the eternal life of wisdom.

Leon Gutterman

EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

HEMINGWAY *and the American Novel*

by John Atkins

IT WAS THE STYLE THAT WON THE DISCIPLES but the disciples very soon discovered that the style belonged to a remarkable man. It is not often that a literary leader is capable of becoming a hero or leader of men. He is rarely a man of action for there is rarely sufficient energy in the one frame to encompass both roles. But Hemingway is an exception. If he had never been a writer his great strength, his sporting skill and his flair for an adventurous situation would still have enabled him to make his mark in a chaotic society for which he seems to have been specially designed.

To begin with, he is a big man with the kind of body that can be used for busting through tough spots. His body is enormous and oddly proportioned. Most of his 215-odd pounds are in his upper torso and extremities . . . . His legs are thin to the point of being delicate, but his barrel chest, shoulders and arms are huge. So are his hands; shaking hands with Hemingway is a good deal like bumping into a door. A boxer named Harry Sylvester with whom Hemingway used to spar told John McCaffery that he was the strongest man that he had ever known. He used to box at 198 pounds. He has become known as a fisherman, not of small fry but of giant marlin and tuna. He has a name for fighting and boating his fish fast before the sharks have time to mutilate them. With the strength goes endurance. When he took *For Whom the Bell Tolls* to the printer there were still revisions to be made. He rented a drawing room on the train from Miami to New York and worked straight through at a temperature of 128, the air-conditioning system being out of order. When he received the galley proofs he worked on them in his hotel for 96 hours without leaving the room. Damon Runyon said of him, "Few men can stand the strain of relaxing with him over an extended period."

Those who know him insist that the stories about him are true. There is a real background to the legend. There are many stories of his courage, particularly during the recent war when he roamed the Western Theatre in his own style.

It is impossible to live the kind of life that Hemingway has lived (war, game hunting, poking his nose into dangerous corners) and come out unscarred. He is in fact scarred from head to foot. Courage, either moral or physical, is one of the chief things he demands from his friends. They are an assorted set, including wealthy sportsmen, generals, priests, prizefighters, jockeys, matadors and movie stars.

He lives big too. At his Spanish-style farmhouse, Finca Vigia, near Havana, Cuba, everything is on a patriarchal scale, Hemingway surrounded by family, friends and retainers. Fifteen acres with gardens, tennis court and swimming pool, and a white tower with his study at the top. The living room is sixty feet long and is lined with heads of beasts. The Chinese cook never knows how many for dinner. Two houseboys, two or three gardeners, a chauffeur for the two cars and station wagon, an engineer for the fishing boat. Cats vary in number from about twenty to fifty. He picks up people who stay with him indefinitely.

The rough, tough, fighting literary man is a character that has immense appeal for some people. For others it is a contradiction in terms. From both angles the story gets out of hand. Probably the most notorious event in Hemingway's life was not the publication of *Fiesta* but his fight with Max Eastman. One set of people say, "You see, our hero can do the things he writes about"; another set says scornfully, "And this is supposed to be a great writer!" The story has been degraded to a boasting match about who had the most hairs on his chest. It has become known as The Fight and it flourishes on guesswork. Probably the only people who really knew what happened were Hemingway, Eastman and Max Perkins, their publisher, and only Perkins had an unprejudiced view.

One result of Hemingway's very real love of the open-air and sporting life is his frequent analogy between life and sport. Although he is insistent on his seriousness with regard to writing it is impossible to feel that he feels the same about life itself. We are part of life, pitched into it whether we like it or not, and it is useless to complain or pretend that our views on the subject are going to produce much of a repercussion on the question of comingness and goingness. Life is the framework which we accept. Our energies must be directed towards the segments of life, not towards its wholeness. It is therefore perfectly rational to torture oneself about writing or endanger oneself in sport and at the same time remain quite unmoved by the religious purpose or metaphysical design of the whole of which they are parts.

For Hemingway it is only possible to know life through some such activity as writing or sport. In short, life becomes an abstraction or something that is too large for the individual to grasp. One can write and be a writer, shoot game or box and be a sportsman, and in this way be part of the greater thing, life, up to the hilt. But it's no good trying to get round the scabbard, trying to bracket the unknown with arms trained for shooting or loving or drinking. Sometimes, in one of his expansive moods (more frequent recently) Hemingway writes about "life" but nearly always as a reflection of sport, the thing he knows and is good at. The few people who have been allowed to interview him agree on this. For instance, according to Harvey Breit he said, "Life is the greatest left-hooker so far, although many say it was Charley White of Chicago."

Is he a sectional or national writer? No, a good writer is just a writer. "That's the hard league to play in. The ball is standard, the ball parks vary somewhat, but they are all good. There are no bad bounces. Alibis don't count. Go out and do your stuff." Critics? "They are like those people who go to ball games and can't tell the players without a score card. I am not worried about what anybody I do not like might do. If they can do you harm, let them do it. It is like being a third baseman and protesting because they hit line drives to you."

It is time we had a look at where this man came from. There was nothing remarkable about his family background. There were no Negro giants behind him, as with Alexandre Dumas, nor was he the illegitimate son of a dictator. He was born in 1898 in Oak Park, a Chicago suburb and the middle-class capital of the world. His father was a doctor who taught Ernest to hunt and fish, chiefly when on holiday in Michigan. His mother was a music-lover and the Hemingways used to invite audiences to their large music room

Hemingway by Karsh

to hear her sing. His parents gave him a fishing rod, shotgun and cello. He scamped the cello for fishing. At fourteen Ernest took boxing lessons and had his nose broken, but he kept going, despite damage to his eye. He was a good footballer but missed important games through injury. He had the inner urge to excel at everything. He edited the school weekly and wrote stories for the school quarterly. He belonged to the debating club, the Hanna Club (lectures by prominent citizens), the Boys' Rifle Club, played in the school orchestra, was in the swimming team, managed the track team, wrote the class prophecy. He wasn't happy at school and twice ran away from home. He didn't go to dances until his last year. His classmates say he was a lonely boy, despite his wide activities, and they made him the butt of their jokes. This may be a parallel to the contemporary practice of nonentity journalists in trying to make a fool out of him. Some people don't like too high a standard of achievement to be set against their own failures.

Then the War, enlistment in an Italian ambulance unit, the leg wound that meant so much to him. (The first of the many scars, but a multiple one.) Another complete break, with the middle-western boy now living the bohemian life in Paris 1921. We have a quick sketch of Hemingway by Ford Madox Ford, advancing with "rather the aspect of an Eton-Oxford, huskyish young captain of a midland regiment of His Britannic Majesty . . . . balancing on the point of his toes, feinting at my head with hands as large as hams, and relating sinister stories of Paris landlords." At first Hemingway was a journalist, that is to say, he had not yet learned to distinguish between journalism and writing. It was Gertrude Stein who saw the spark and advised him to concentrate on *writing*. At first Gertrude preferred his poems to his prose. She was always grateful to him, despite differences of opinion, because he was the first of the young men to come knocking at her door, and because he was instrumental in getting "really the beginning of modern writing" (*The Making of Americans*) published.

But Gertrude Stein had not been the first, except indirectly. In 1919 Hemingway had returned from Italy and had taken a job as editor of a house-organ for the Cooperative Society of America. It was then that he met Sherwood Anderson. Gertrude Stein must come first in any listing of Hemingway's influences, not only because hers was the most fruitful one but also because Anderson had learned many of his tricks from her. Anderson was first in time, Stein in importance. But Hemingway had the healthy faculty of outgrowing his influences. By 1926 and *The Torrents of Spring* he was criticizing the older man.

I am referring here to his relationships with the two writers to whom he probably owed most because Hemingway was, by hard work and hard, instinctive criticism, establishing his position as literary idol. During the twenties the robust man with the robust style was compelling the younger writers, both his contemporaries and those who came after, to look to him for a lead. By the thirties he was one of the four writers who, according to John Lehmann, offered positive foundations for those who wished to become writers. The others were E. M. Forster, D. H. Lawrence and Wilfred Owen. It is not easy to agree with the choice of this quadrumvirate: Forster is questionable and there are others who might be admitted. But there is no doubt that Hemingway should be one of them. *Fiesta, Farewell to Arms* and the short stories had settled that. The position Hemingway holds now was fought for in the twenties and was consolidated by *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, which has the air of having been written by an elder statesman. The legend-making belongs largely to the later period. Recently Arthur Koestler told the Americans, "Don't underestimate your Hemingway. It is banal, but he is still the greatest living writer." Even Ehrenburg has capitulated: "the best writer in the world today is not a Russian at all." Even Hemingway's wife agreed. "Who is the greatest writer in America?" asked the Austrian in *Green Hills of Africa*. "My husband," she said.

One gets the feeling with Hemingway that he made up his mind very early to become top writer and made everything else subservient to it. There must have been cases in which a writer was determined to become a good writer, but the competitive spirit that flows from Hemingway anecdotes is something new. Whatever he does, he wishes to do it best. Some people, including writers like Shaw, hold the competitive spirit in such horror that this trait tends to destroy their appreciation of Hemingway's work. I doubt if it is any more important or vicious than the desire to win a fight or football match. Perhaps it is perverse to bring literature into the arena but we have already seen how the sectors of life in which he participates are always envisaged by Hemingway in sporting terms. (Nor did he invent the Nobel and Pulitzer Prizes, which are an invitation to competitiveness.) Even in those sports where there is not normally the competitive element Hemingway manages to inject it. When he went game-hunting it was imperative that he should have the best bag.

If sport is a mirror of life it is also a mirror of any other activity in life, such as writing. Today he says, "I'm modest. I just want to be Champion." Some say he is. Judgment is difficult. Perhaps it is this difficulty, this constant absence of certainty, that causes artists to fly off the handle so easily. Their work is always "in progress," there is no finality to it, except with the few like Hardy or Forster who pull down the shutters with a deliberate bang. But Hemingway can probably get far more satisfaction out of knowing that he holds the world's championship for tuna than out of hoping he is World Literary Champ.

The chorus of approval reaches its peak with John O'Hara who calls Hemingway "the outstanding author since the death of Shakespeare." Without considering that, we may at least consider his status as a literary personality, owing less to his actual written work than to the legend that has accrued. Here and now I want to consider it chiefly as something that gets in the way of true appraisal. Hemingway belongs to those few spirits like Trelawney, Wilde, Shaw and Byron whose personal myths have overshadowed their work. A public discussion of Hemingway's work is impossible; unless it is confined to the privacy of the study we are certain to be disturbed by the intrusion of the Big Game Hunter and War Correspondent. The spread of the legend, resulting in an expanding reputation among people who never read his books, really dated from the Spanish War and came to full status during the World War. (There had been an earlier, Lost Generation legend but it was limited and by now submerged. The new one was spread by films and magazines.)

Despite the Lost Generation and the killers and the dubious revolutionaries and the inarticulate human beings, let us regard Hemingway as a recording instrument. He put down what he saw, just as Conrad did, and also what he heard. His subject was society and although he influenced society or a section of it, this was a by-product for his intention had been artistic not moralistic. If Hemingway had not been such a powerful writer, gathering disciples he never knew as he progressed, no one would have troubled to have scrutinized the opinions of his characters so closely. Henry Seidel Canby, introducing the Modern Library edition of *The Sun Also Rises*, said the novel, "among other things is an example of first-rate reporting." This is not the whole story but the rest is feeling and understanding, not didacticism. The reading public turned *For Whom The Bell Tolls* into a partly didactic novel. In the intellectual climate of that time a first-rate writer hardly dared to stand aside. Stephen Spender had the right idea when he wrote that Hemingway is "corrupt in his values to the extent that his age is corrupt." Even so, this can still be only a half-truth. Because Hemingway did not

write of the Lost Generation in terms of horror (which would quickly become boring) it is wrong to assume that he accepted their values or lack of values.

Hemingway's fame was won largely by the simplicity of his style, which some call deceptive, meaning the ease is in the reading not in the writing. Simple writing is the hard way, leaving the author naked.

"If a man writes clearly enough anyone can see if he fakes. If he mystifies to avoid a straight statement, which is very different from breaking so-called rules of syntax or grammar to make an effect which can be obtained in no other way, the writer takes a longer time to be known as a fake and other writers who are afflicted by the same necessity will praise him in their own defense." He concludes: "all bad writers are in love with the epic."

It is the absorption in things in themselves that marked Hemingway off from his predecessors and most of his contemporaries. There is never any feeling of strain, any suspicion that a description is a nicely planned piece of symbolism. Often, of course it is symbolic—but always out of its own trueness. It is symbolic in the way that life itself can suddenly become symbolic, leading to a belief in omens and a directing power who warns those who have the wit to understand. But classical symbolism which persisted till a very late day even among the best novelists and is still part of the stock-in-trade of the others, is rarely to be found in Hemingway's work. There is a surprising example in *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*, where a man is dying and "death had come and rested its head on the foot of the cot and he could smell its breath." This is so unusual in Hemingway the reader cannot dispel the suspicion that after all there must have been something real that really smelt. Even Hemingway must have been amazed by this intrusion of an alien sentiment for he hastily adds (in the dying man's words) that death needn't be a skeleton with a scythe but might just as easily be two bicycle policemen or a bird.

Reviewing *The Sun Also Rises* on its first publication the *Nation* wrote: "his perception of the physical object is direct and accurate; his vision of character singularly oblique." This dualism is most marked in all the early work, up to and including *To Have and Have Not*, though in this novel a dilution has already begun. Hemingway keeps both eyes on the object and half an eye on the man: but his ears are wide open. The critic J. Kashkeen refers to a theory of "expressive suggestion." The suggestion is twofold, and its action corresponds to the difference in material, human and non-human. As is well-known, the accumulation of external details conveys a mood, a mood which the sensibility of the reader picks up like a radio receiver. He gets no direct assistance from the author. But the reality of the characters is conveyed by a directly opposite method. They are never described in the same detailed way. It is impossible to think of a Hemingway character and describe his appearance with any certainty. We are given his mannerisms of gesture, perhaps, but more usually of speech. There is no struggle with the author as happens so often when reading novelists of the past, where a personal image conflicts with the carefully delineated image presented by his creator. Hemingway allows us to share in creation, we finish out of our own experience the sketch he has begun.

So many of the details appear to be unnecessary. It is a sudden word or phrase that suddenly blends them into a comprehensible whole. The reader must have the sensibility or, in some cases, the experience to grasp the key. It is not always accessible. It is very much an esoteric literature in this sense. Also it is no adverse criticism of a reader if he does not grasp the key—it may belong to a sphere of living in which he has never participated. For this reason a reader may be justified in claiming that Hemingway is deliberately obscure. I know for myself that stories which were once incomprehensible to me have after some years become little masterpieces because in the meantime I have broadened my experience and been able to connect the fragments in a meaningful way.

There are always readers who will ask: Is the obscurity justified by the effect? They are usually people who find satisfaction in the patterned stories of O. Henry and de Maupassant. Hemingway's defense could be that as he deliberately sets out to give as close a rendering of life through the medium of words as is possible, he could not honestly write in any other way. People very often do not name the most important things in their lives, though they may refer to them continually. Life is not arranged in self-contained episodes and even when old people profess to see a plan which contains the whole of their past experience and is being brought to its completion, it is fairly certain that such a plan is a psychological construct which ignores, thanks to a convenient memory, all unassimilable data. Hemingway's stories do not please the architects among us. Instead they give a sense of life as chaotic as experience itself. We should always be on the lookout for literary rationalization, too. The desire for innovation usually arises out of intense boredom. Hemingway started writing his stories at a time when the old plot genre had become so widespread and familiar that everyone who used a pen could put a competent story together with considerable technical skill (according to the standards of the day) and a complete absence of poetic thrill. Boredom and a cracking culture are a powerful combination.

It is impossible to discuss Hemingway's style without considering the verbal-emotional discipline which is its central feature. This style appears so casual, so careless. Yet it has enormous personality. Now this personality is not the careful creation of a Flaubert, for although Hemingway works hard on his scripts it is impossible to simulate carelessness and indifference. They are self-existing qualities, part of life and essential to poetry. It is less his art than his poetry that distinguishes Hemingway. It is by training his poetic instinct to one end alone that he enables it to produce its full effect. This aim lies in the reproduction only of what he sees and hears. He followed Conrad who insisted on putting down what he saw and never what his intellect inferred. Hemingway is at the other extreme from Scott who described landscapes on a level of unchanging monotony. He always wrote down what he knew to be there, never simply what he saw. When he is not interested in a scene Hemingway dismisses it with a few words, giving a generalized impression—anonymous people in an anonymous street, undifferentiated masses of green on a brown hillside. But as soon as his interest becomes engaged his senses become alert and we are presented with the details in all their sharp actuality.

As John Lehmann once wrote, you do not need a university education to get the full flavour from Hemingway. He has retained the ordinary man's way of looking at things which is rare in a writer. Neither education nor professional pride have persuaded him to wallow in the inessential, one of the major faults of our literature. Yet the charge against him has been that he cannot distinguish between the relevant and the irrelevant. The truth is that what is irrelevant to the academically-trained mind is not the same as that seen by the untrained mind. Writing of the latter he adopts its methods and viewpoints.

Many people who insist that he cannot write still admit that he is a master of dialogue. "But, you say, there is very little dialogue in this book. Why isn't there more dialogue? What we want in a book by this citizen is people talking; that is all he knows how to do and now he doesn't do it." Hemingway takes immense trouble with his dialogue. It's got to sound right—which isn't the same as saying it must be an exact transcription. Sam Boal describes how, when he has finished his day's work, Hemingway insists on reading it over to anyone who can be pressed into service—usually his wife, but it may be an utterly unliterary guest (better for Hemingway's

purposes, anyway). The reading is punctuated by questions: "That sound right? Hit your ears right? People talk that way?" This is the technical illustration of the intellectual criticism that Hemingway's appeal is solely to the senses. He writes from the senses and is biology talking.

Hemingway himself admits that it is easier to write in the first person. In an answer to one of my stupid questions he says, "When I wrote the first two novels I had not learned to write in the third person. The first person gives you great intimacy in attempting to give a complete sense of experience to the reader. It is limited however and in the third person the novelist can work in other people's heads and in other people's country. His range is greatly extended and so are his obligations. I prepared myself for writing in the third person by the discipline of writing *Death in the Afternoon;* the short stories and especially the long short stories of *The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber* and *The Snows of Kilimanjaro.* In *The Snows of Kilimanjaro* I put in and deliberately used what could have made many novels to see how far it was possible to concentrate in a medium."

The third person requires the constant effort of projection but without its use the novelist is almost certain to move the same character through all his work. To retain the first person and yet vary the character is hardest of all.

Where did Hemingway learn to write in his fresh, invigorating way? Where did his words come from, those words which, in Ford Madox Ford's phrase, "strike you, each one, as if they were pebbles fetched fresh from a brook. They live and shine, each in its place. So one of his pages has the effect of a brookbottom into which you look down through the flowing water. The words form a tessellation, each in order beside the other." They were not new words, like Joyce's. They were the old words used in a new way, in a new order —a new order for literature but not for the ordinary purposes of life. It is the intrusion of the language of everyday activity into the sphere of literary convention that delighted his readers. The Italian battlefields, the rout of the Greeks in Smyrna, taught the young Hemingway reality before he had time to surrender to the shams. But he was not alone in that. Many young men shared the experience. Ford himself hammered one of the cleanest prose styles of our time out of it. The influence of the Paris bars, apparently so far removed from the normal purposes of living, helped complete this education. The advantage of bohemianism lay in its detachment, the opportunity it gave to dissociate oneself from the conception of society a reader gathers from his daily newspaper. You could even work as a newspaper man, as Hemingway did, and still stay remote, for your money-earning self was distinct from your true self, the one that sought for sensation as the true aim. These men did not consider the possibility of fulfillment through vocation. They seemed to take it for granted that one should set aside so many hours for drudgery, perhaps as payment for the good in life.

One reason Hemingway found it easy to communicate his personality was because he rarely chose the company of intellectuals. In Spain he mixed with the soldiers while others talked the sun down with political speculation. This is in keeping with his normal mode of expression. He does not chew the cud of theory like the intellectual but gets his teeth into everyday details as the soldier is compelled to. When asked to say something about contemporary themes, he replied: "The themes have always been love, lack of it, death and its occasional temporary avoidance which we describe as life, the immortality or lack of immortality of the soul, money, honor and politics." This is as far as he is likely to go in abstraction. It is much closer to the myth-seeking mind of ordinary man than the analyses which probe into matters of original sin, guilt complex and mother fixation. They formed the raw material of older myths which have lost their overt attraction. The secret of Hemingway's power is probably his unashamed and much-publicized determination to enjoy himself, which is exactly what most people want to do, but few have sufficient confidence to say it openly. He is not a writer who announces a search for the Holy Grail. The ordinary man is doubtful of its value. He can see that Hemingway's "good life" would be good for him too, and so Hemingway earns his admiration.

A lot of Hemingway's conversation, his own and his characters', and also his descriptive and narrative prose, has a clumsy feel to it. It is like a man groping for the most effective expression. He can at times talk fluently and coherently, especially about his craft, but he never loses the common-man touch. "Like so many Americans, he has an immense gift of the gab, combined with a distrust of the power of all coherent language to express truth, an unnerving fear that logical thought and speech, may, after all, be meaningless fripperies." He probably does think that much of what passed for literature, no matter how coherent it might appear, was a meaningless frippery. The mind slides over the shiny surface of academic clichés.

Sam Boal has even tried to pass Hemingway off as a great conversationalist. In evidence he gives the rather surprising information that in one ten-minute conversation Hemingway "brought up" eight subjects, including the origin of Thanksgiving, Tintoretto and How To Cook A Grouse. It may be rather English of me to say so but I doubt if this is most people's idea of conversation; the view that it is gives us an interesting glimpse of his personality and its power over those who know him. We are acquainted with those people whose slightest utterance is treasured by disciples and later published as revelation. In Hemingway's case we see that anything he does or says is liable to be dubbed "great." This reveals better than any action of his own the extent to which he has become a myth-hero. For the record, his talk is said to be mountainous in wisdom, steady in output and reminiscent in content.

The distinguishing feature of his style, which we are told is true also of his conversation (and this is supported by examples given by journalists whom I have to take on trust), apart from its grittiness, lies in the absence of adjectives. Boal says he not only spares the adjective but omits the article: "Man needs food. Where is waiter?" One day it may become difficult to accept the fact that Hemingway and Sir Osbert Sitwell were contemporaries. (Hemingway was born in 1898, Sitwell in 1892.) They went to war at about the same time and they have shared a world. Yet while Hemingway spits out his words, races through life and rarely pauses for reflection, Sitwell lingers over every syllable. every memory and sensation, and is reluctant to pass to the next for fear some juice should remain unsqueezed. Such contrasts reveal Hemingway more effectively than any close appreciation.

Concentrating on the man it is easy to lose the writer, which would be a pity, especially as it is the writer we are trying to pin down. So far I have referred to Hemingway's childhood and youth, his great strength, his competitive spirit, his addiction to sport, his courage, the people who influenced him, the type of friend he likes, the growth of the Hemingway legend, his conversational style. But how do all these things make a complete man and how are they transmuted into the writing? Hemingway's friend, novelist John O'Hara, tries to give the answer. O'Hara, like Hemingway, is an entirely creative and reproductive writer—that is to say, his mind has no traces of the analytical faculty. When a writer of this type is asked for an opinion he usually gives a rather chaotic, impressionist sprawl which one flounders in like a swamp. And yet I normally find these sprawls more rewarding, certainly more spirited and intuitive than the measured pace of the trained critic, pigeonholing everything into prearranged categories and rejecting those pieces that won't fit the patent puzzle. And, of course, O'Hara is a novelist which means he knows how a novelist goes to work. All this by way of justification for a long quote but one that knits up Ernest

Hemingway of Oak Park and Finca Vigia with the author of *Fiesta* and *Across the River*.

"But what Hemingway has—and Steinbeck has it too—is pre-paper discipline. It means, first of all, point of view. A great many non-writers have it without having to reveal it; but with an author it is not only revealing; it is often exposing. A possibly over-simplified definition of point-of-view would be 'feeling and preference' and, in an author's case, the expression of an attitude. It is in the manner and method of the expression of the attitude that writers vary, and before that, the pre-paper discipline—the thinking, the self-editing—gets its test.

"An author may seem to lead a ruggedly simple life, but the fact that he is an author makes him not a simple individual. The personality therefore requires enormous discipline in putting the uncomplicated thinking down on paper. The ostensibly simple lives led by men like Hemingway and Steinbeck tell practically nothing about the personalities, although the writing is simple too. The ostensibly simple life led by William Faulkner tells nothing about him either, for the writing comes out plain but complicated, with so little change in the process between first thoughts and final printed page that Faulkner, while a genius, may not be an artist. It makes small difference to him or to me."

It is best not to over-comment on this, as it speaks for itself. I merely wish to draw attention to three points which concern us in the liaison I am trying to make. First, "feeling and preference," arising out of biological factors (practically unknown) and experience, to which I have alluded in some detail. Second, "pre-paper discipline," getting the unwieldy "point of view" into manageable shape. Thirdly, the complicated personality disciplining its thought and observation into an acceptably simplified expression. This does not link man and writer completely for only complete knowledge of both would make it possible. But we have noted the feeling and preference for sport and competition, seen it become manageable and organizable in, say, *To Have and Have Not* and watched the complicated personality finding an acceptable expression in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*.

The writer must purify himself where the man cannot. A man's life is constant repetition but a writer's work must avoid this above all else. Writing becomes progressively more difficult. The first books are excavations of untapped resources; later comes refinement and search at deeper levels. "Should I repeat myself? I don't think so. You have to repeat yourself again and again as a man but you should not do so as a writer." There has naturally been overlapping in his work but on the whole each novel has taken us to new ground.

On the subject of critics Hemingway is sometimes explosive. He believes, quite rightly, that they are often not interested in the work under review. Instead they prefer to pass judgment on the writer's private life or an idea which he doesn't hold but which they think he holds or ought to hold. The activity of critics can be dangerous, erosive like wind and rain. It is not wise for a writer to read the critics. They will confuse him. They will fill his head with notions that are better withheld. All this is something quite apart from the bitterness that is the professional malady of critics, although they are often skilled enough to clothe their prejudice in weighty phrases of seeming objectivity. Hemingway's acuteness is brought to its finest pitch when he considers these natural enemies. (He must feel like a kudu with himself to windward.) Everyone knows that praise is not always helpful to the writer. Hemingway can see the implication.

"If they believe the critics when they say they are great then they must believe them when they say they are rotten and they lose confidence. At present we have two good writers who cannot write because they have lost confidence through reading critics. If they wrote, sometimes it would be good and sometimes not so good and sometimes it would be quite bad, but the good would get out. But they have read the critics and they must write masterpieces. They weren't masterpieces, of course. They were just quite good books. So now they cannot write at all. The critics have made them impotent."

Should a writer believe he is good or not? If he doubts his goodness he will write without confidence and his work will stumble. If he doubts his badness his work will be superficial and it will bore. Critics and editors are always demanding excellence. Editors have told me that they insist on excellence in all the work they print and they actually believed they achieved it, though their faith was refuted weekly when their organs appeared on the newsstands. Some would reject *David Copperfield* because it contains self-pity, *The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze* for its sentimentality, *The Tropic of Cancer* for its obscenity, *The Memoirs of a Midget* for its whimsicality. If your eyes are constantly wide for excellence you won't see it. There's too much grit flying about. Excellence comes in by the back door and is frequently not recognized, not for a hundred years anyway. What about Melville?

In a letter Hemingway insisted on the difficulty of understanding that exists between the writer and even the best critics. Any man is liable to be prejudiced about his own life since he knows things about it that the most sympathetic critic could not possibly understand because he lacks the context of 24 hours a day for 50 years. Critics have to examine the skin and do their best to deduce the skeleton and gastric juices. After suffering from the attention of people who wanted to put the True Hemingway on paper for people to rub their hands over, he had a fit of revulsion and for twelve years refused to give a newspaper interview. He says he has never been to a literary tea or cocktail party, and went in and out of New York without seeing a reporter.

I'll give Hemingway the final word. "Some critics are well-intentioned, most of them I believe. But some are not. When you ask understanding they bring envy and jealousy. Sometimes they give off an odour that you only smell in the armpits of the shirts of traitors after they have been hanged. But these are the rare ones. I believe there is a segment of criticism which would be happier if there were no books written and if they could only write about each other and their own opinions. But perhaps nature, or God, will provide a bloody flux for which there will be no antidote and to which they only will be susceptible and it will do away with them."

Hemingway is a writer who feels the movement of myth in his unconscious but refuses to dilute or "explain" contemporaneity. The major characteristic of this contemporaneity is its admiration for force. Culture is being proletarianized, spiritual refinement is being reformed. A proletarianized culture demands a proletarianized literature for its expression. Emphasis is on the thing rather than its interpretation. Hemingway's contact with the true proletariat has been small. He knows them through their outposts and outlaws. At the same time he has studied the detritus of the old culture, those who have surrendered to the new spirit while retaining fragments of the old. This admiration of force is not perverted. It is a regression. Human development oscillates between natural and political man.

Where does this bring us? Hemingway shows us the emptiness of the Waste Land in his own terms. Frequently he appears to condone it and even voluntarily enter into it. This should not concern us unless we are moralists. The chief contribution of his work to our understanding of this society is its emphasis on the part played by fear in aggravating the condition; its feeding on itself; its possible conquest by shock; or by discipline. In his latest phase he stresses the importance of communion even if its only complete realization lies in death. Like many other realists, Hemingway becomes a mystic against his will and judgment. ♦

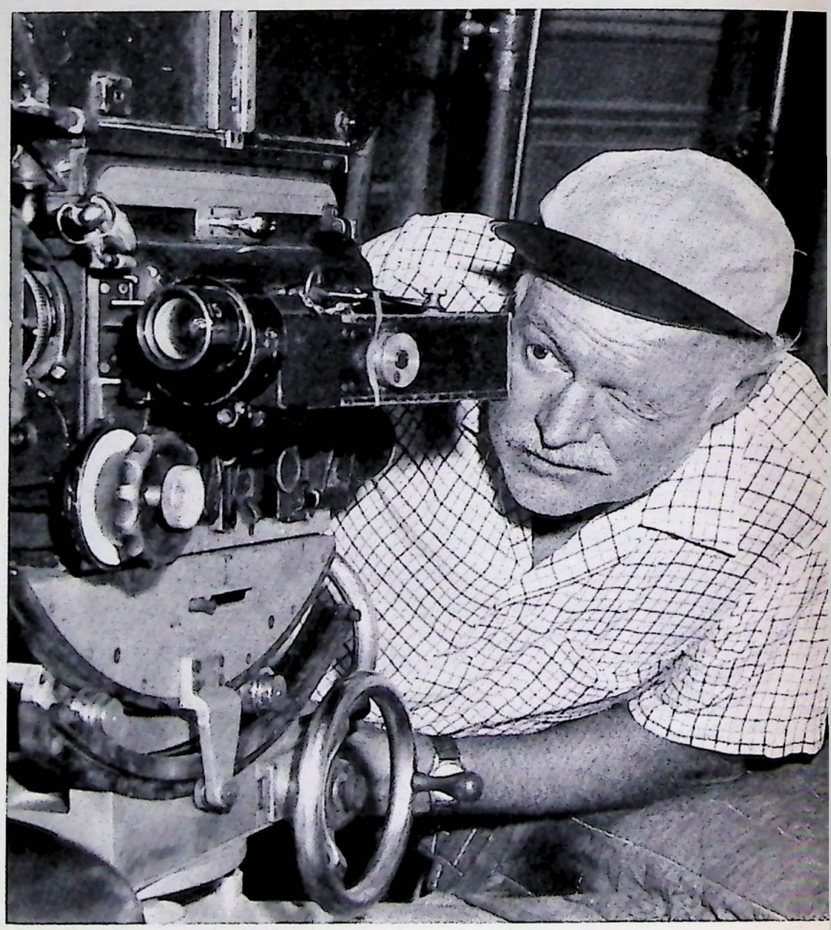
HEMINGWAY *and the Motion Picture*

For many years Ernest Hemingway has had a successful association with the motion picture industry. Ever since Paramount bought *For Whom the Bell Tolls* for a reputed $150,000, much of his income has been derived from films. 20th Century-Fox is said to have paid $125,000 for the film rights of *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*—a record price for a short story.

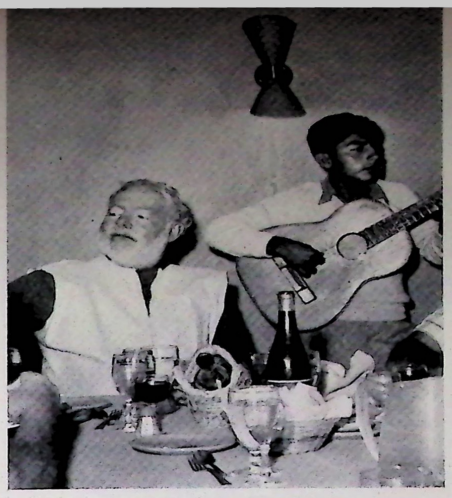
Because of his supremely disciplined writing and his avoidance of inessentials, most of Hemingway's books can be readily translated into hit films. Indeed, much of his work might well have been planned specifically for filming. Hemingway seems to provide his own shooting directions; he clearly defines the period of time a lens shall linger over a scene. Time is condensed and a series of impressions is rapidly sketched, one flowing into the other by a form of selection similar to that of the narrating lens. *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and David O. Selznick's production *A Farewell to Arms* carry the air of having been written with film production specifically in mind. Large portions of both books suggest that Hemingway's eye is working in the same way as the camera works under a good director. The hard ring of authority in his writing is communicated to his films, as is the case with Warner Bros.' *The Old Man and The Sea*. Such authority can be achieved only by taking pains.

Hemingway often acts as adviser during the filming of his works. His veracity, his gift for sharply characterized sensation, his preoccupation with emotion, and his delineation of human traits find great favor with movie-goers.

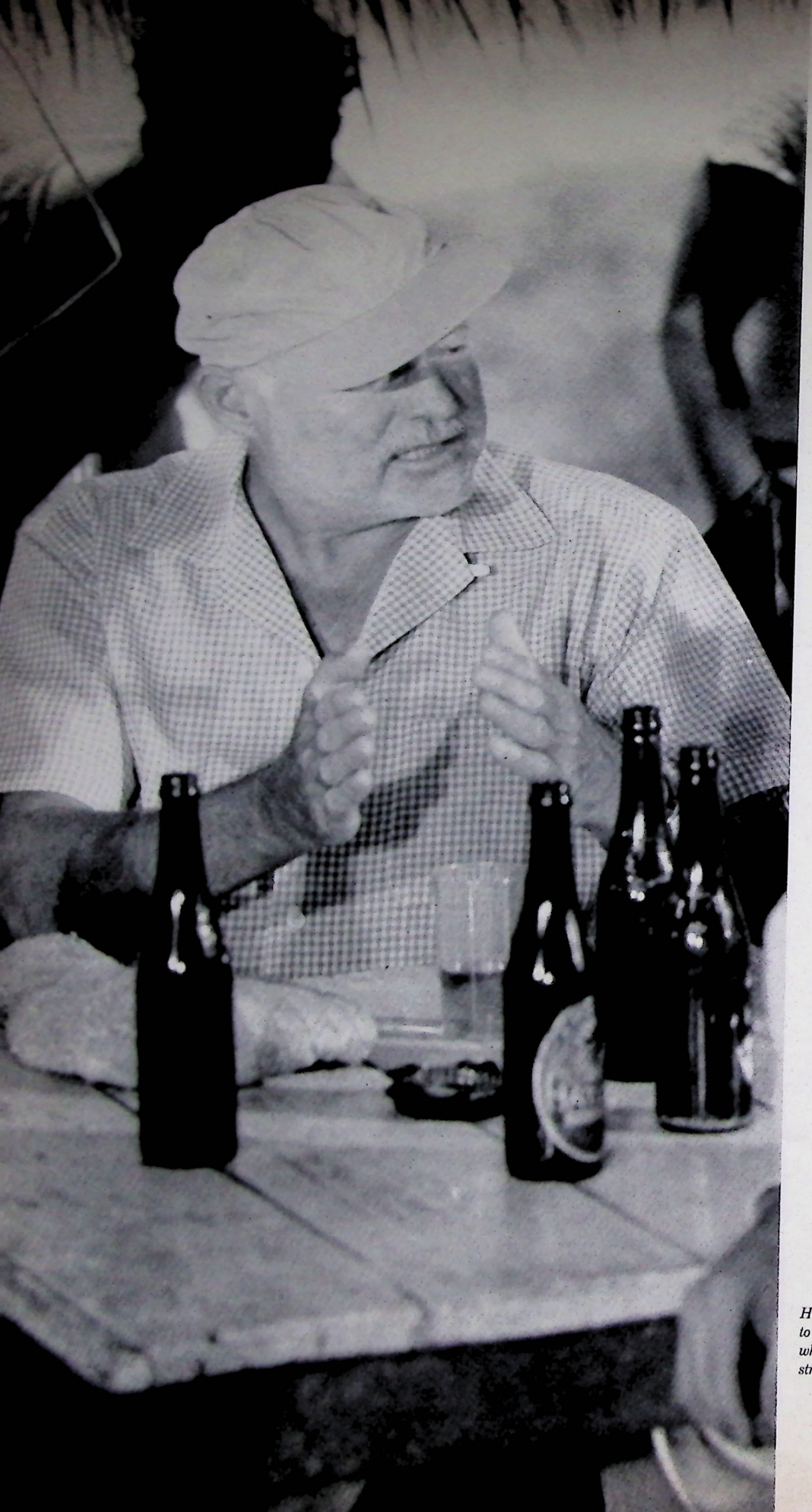
In the medium of the film as well as the novel, Hemingway comes through as the chronicler of genuine emotional reactions. It has been his distinction to express the restlessness of an age in which so many feel at cross-purposes with the rest of the world, for he is busy with true qualities of heart in contrast to the superficiality of our time.



After a tiring day fighting marlin in tropical waters during the filming of "The Old Man and The Sea," Hemingway still has energy enough to seek out his favorite café.



Before the day's filming begins, Hemingway discusses the scenes with Spencer Tracy, star of the Leland Hayward Production for Warner Bros. of "The Old Man and The Sea." Much of Hemingway's first-hand knowledge of big-game fishing proved invaluable during the filming of the prize-winning novel.

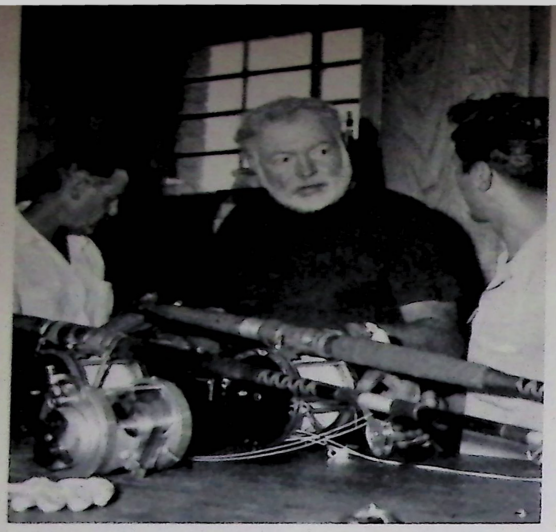


Hemingway passes on some valuable advice to colleagues in the motion picture unit about what to expect when filming the coming struggle with a giant marlin.

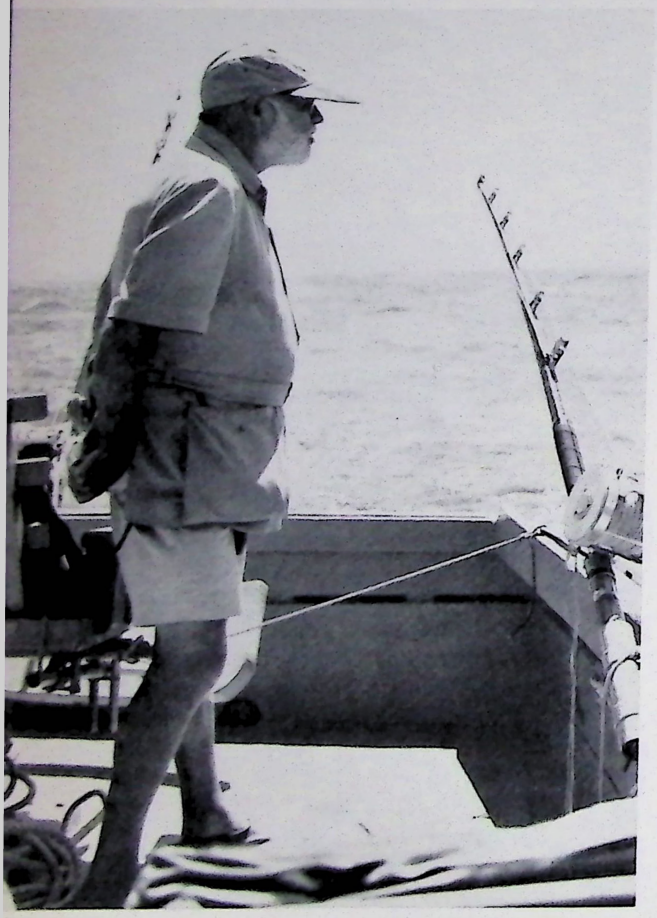
Attention is diverted as a strike is made by a neighboring boat. Hemingway's boat maneuvers to give the cameraman the most dramatic angle, as the fish begins to fight.

Like other great figures of our time, Hemingway is popular with autograph hunters. He is noted for his kindness and warm personality.

HEMINGWAY



Careful preparation of equipment is essential before battling with fish which may weigh more than 1000 pounds.



Hemingway stalks the deck, alert to the first snap of the giant fish and the sing of the reel as the line runs out.

Sharp-eyed lookouts are invaluable when big-game fishing. In the foreground (above) is Hemingway's wife, Mary. Hemingway (right) is always on the alert for his quarry.

and the Great Outdoors

Ernest Hemingway first exposed himself to physical danger and physical hardship because he wanted to become a great writer, and early in life he saw that certain truths about people could be studied only when men and women were under stress. His activities in seeking such truths have become legendary. He has been in the front lines of three wars, and between times has made himself a relentless hunter, a competent yachtsman, a formidable boxer, and an *aficionado* of the bull ring. He has a reputation throughout the Caribbean as a big-game fisherman who boats his fish fast before the sharks can get at them.

The scars on Hemingway's body are grim testimony to the risks he has taken. In his teens he was almost blinded by a boxing injury. In World War I, when an ambulance driver on the Italian front, he was blown up by an Austrian mortar and the doctors counted 237 pieces of shrapnel in his legs. A car accident in 1930 almost cost him his right arm, and in 1954 he survived two plane crashes in the African jungle which jammed his spine, caused internal injuries, and gave him concussion so severely as to temporarily impair his eyesight. Later he joked, "The doctor said the head injury did not affect the section of the brain I used to write with."

In his search for experience as a writer, Hemingway has become firmly identified with the Great Outdoors. He is a man's man, and his friends are men of action who have achieved a high standard in some form of activity that engages his passionate interest. They are people who combine physical or moral courage with the habit of being dependable in a crisis.

Hemingway exploits the thrill of action and sensation in his novels. He appears as himself, talking through his heroes and reporting the emotions he has experienced in those moments of tension which fascinate him so much. He has taken risks and survived, and through his writing he shows us the world as it really is.

One of Hemingway's smaller catches was the marlin (right) which he calls one of his "babies." It weighed more than 800 pounds. Hemingway (left) looks on and a crew member gesticulates as a friend battles with an enormous marlin.

ERNEST HEMINGWAY, WINNER OF NOBEL PRIZE FOR LITERATURE 1954

" . . . for his powerful style-forming mastery of the art of modern narration, as most recently evidenced in *The Old Man and The Sea.*"

FROM THE NOBEL AWARD CITATION

HEMINGWAY

The Old Man and The Sea

Drawing on the lore of Cuban fishermen and the experience of his many strenuous battles with big fish, Hemingway wrote the prize-winning novel *The Old Man and The Sea,* which has now been filmed by Warner Bros. Spencer Tracy plays the role of the old man who is victorious in his battle against a giant marlin, only to lose everything to the sharks but the fish's skeleton.

As adviser on the film, it was Hemingway's self-imposed task to provide a suitably docile giant marlin. Accompanied by cameramen and film technicians he set off for Cabo Blanco, near Talara, Peru, the scene of the world's record catch of a 1560-pound black marlin. With Hemingway went his own boat skipper—a veteran of Hemingway's many battles with the big fish. Soon three of Hemingway's heavy rods were shattered by marlin weighing three-quarters of a ton. Then he hooked a giant weighing over 1500 pounds.

"He saw him first as a dark shadow that took so long to pass under the boat that he could not believe its length . . . he came to the surface only thirty yards away and the man saw his tail out of water. It was higher than a big scythe blade and a very pale lavender above the dark blue water. It raked back and as the fish swam just below the surface the old man could see his huge bulk and the purple stripes that banded him. His dorsal fin was down and his huge pectorals were spread wide . . ."

The fish was played, photographed, and finally lost when the rod snapped to Hemingway's terrific efforts. Disappointment was lessened, however, when he caught four other enormous marlin, to maintain his reputation as one of the world's most successful big-game fishermen. The four marlin were shipped to Cuba, where they weighed in at well over 1000 pounds each. Despite the loss of equipment, Hemingway had provided the giant fish which were vital to the filming of the location sequences for *The Old Man and The Sea,* acclaimed by critics as an outstanding motion picture.

"He made the fish fast to bow and stern and to the middle thwart. He was so big it was like lashing a much bigger skiff alongside. Then he stepped the mast and, with the stick that was his gaff and with his boom rigged, the patched sail drew, the boat began to move, and half-lying in the stern he sailed southwest."

"Now the man watched the dip of the three sticks over the side of the skiff and rowed gently to keep the lines straight up and down and at their proper depths . . . All my life the early sun has hurt my eyes, he thought. Yet they are still good. In the evening I can look straight into it without getting the blackness. It has more force in the evening too. But in the morning it is painful."

from the Wisdom of ERNEST HEMINGWAY

Hemingway by Karsh

The actual is made of knowledge, experience, wine, bread, oil, salt, vinegar, bed, early mornings, nights, days, the sea, men, women, dogs, beloved motorcars, bicycles, hills and valleys, the appearance and disappearance of trains on straight and curved tracks . . . cock grouse drumming on a basswood log, the smell of sweetgrass and fresh-smoked leather and Sicily.

The country a novelist knows is the country in his heart.

I have a love of those books which can be read, above all, with a sense of personal participation. I have prepared a list of the sixteen titles in fiction which I would rather read again for the first time than be assured of a million-dollar annual income. The million-dollar list is predominantly continental. Only two English and two American works are included: *Wuthering Heights* and *Far Away and Long Ago*, *Huckleberry Finn* and *Winesburg, Ohio*. George Moore's *Hail and Farewell* and Joyce's *Dubliners* (along with Yeats' *Autobiographies*) represent the Irish. Mann's *Buddenbrooks* is the sole German entry. All of the others are French and Russian. Stendhal's *The Red and the Black* and *The Charterhouse of Parma*, Tolstoi's *Anna Karenina* and *War and Peace* are major items. Also Dumas' *Queen Margot*, Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, Dostoievski's *Brothers Karamazov*, *The Sportsman's Sketches* of Turgenev, and Maupassant's bucolic comedy on *The House of Madame Tellier*.

Later, for the benefit of an apprentice writer who asked for a reading-list, I repeated most of these titles and added five more authors: two novels by the old master Henry Fielding, three by Captain Marryat, and the short stories of Kipling, Stephen Crane, and Henry James. This time also I added Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist* and *Ulysses*, Flaubert's *Sentimental Education*, any other two novels by Dostoievski, and all of Turgenev. The total roster comes to perhaps twenty-five titles. The list can easily be quadrupled.

All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called *Huckleberry Finn*. If you read it you must stop where the slave Jim is stolen from the boys. That is the real end. The rest is just cheating. But it's the best book we've had. All American writing comes from that. There was nothing before. There has been nothing as good since.

A writer can make himself a nice career while he is alive by espousing a political cause, working for it, making a profession of believing in it, and if it wins he will be very well placed . . . . A man can be a fascist or a communist and if his outfit gets in he can get to be an ambassador, or have a million copies of his books printed by the government, or any of the other rewards the boys dream about . . . . But none of this will help him as a writer unless he finds something new to add to human knowledge while he is writing.

Books should be about the people you know, that you love and hate, not about the people you study up about. If you write them truly they will have all the economic implications a book can hold.

The serious artist, whose task it is to write fiction that would survive, must take a different course. A country, finally, erodes and the dust blows away, the people all die and none of them are of any importance permanently, except those who practice the Arts . . . . A thousand years makes economics silly and a work of art endures forever, but it is very difficult to do and now it is not fashionable.

I am a veteran of World War I, and I know what war is really like. I am a veteran newspaper correspondent who had watched, with increasing disgust and hatred, the postwar machinations of European diplomats and dictators in their struggles for power. It is not enough to have a big heart, a pretty good head, a charm of personality, baggy pants, and a facility with a typewriter to know how the world is run; and who is making the assists, the put-outs and the errors; and who are merely the players and who are the owners. As an old newsman, I am prepared to defend the position that no history is written honestly. You have to keep in touch with it at the time, and you can depend on just as much as you have actually seen and followed.

I love *War and Peace* for the wonderful, penetrating, and true descriptions of war and of people but I have never believed in the great Count's thinking. I wish there could have been someone in his confidence with authority to remove his heaviest and worst thinking and keep him simply inventing truly. He could invent more with more insight and truth than anyone who ever lived. But his ponderous and Messianic thinking was no better than that of many another evangelical professor of history, and I learned from him to distrust my Thinking with a capital T and to try to write as truly, as straightly, as objectively and as humbly as possible. If the book is good, is about something that you know, and is truly written, and reading it over you see that this is so, you can let the critics yip. Then the noise will have that pleasant sound coyotes make on a very cold night when they are out in the snow, and you are in your own cabin that you have built and paid for with your work.

My task which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word to make you hear, to make you feel—it is, before all, to make you *see*. That—and no more, and it is everything.

A writer's job is to tell the truth. His standard of fidelity to the truth must be so high that his invention which comes almost and invariably out of his experience, should produce a truer account than anything factual can be.

I only know what I have seen.

Unless you have geography, background, you have nothing. You have a dramatic vacuum.

My aim is to put down on paper what I see and what I feel in the best and simplest way I can tell it.

From nothing else that I have ever read have I gotten what every book of Conrad has given me.

Easy writing makes hard reading. I wish, if I could, to strip language clean, to lay it bare down to the bone.

One of the difficulties in the language is that all our words from loose using have lost their edge.

Emerson I group with Hawthorne and Whittier as very good men with the small, dried, and excellent wisdom of Unitarians; men of letters; Quakers with a sense of humor . . . . They were all very respectable. They did not use the words that people have always used in speech, the words that survive in language. Nor would you gather that they had bodies. They had minds, yes. Nice, dry, clean minds.

There is only one thing to do with a novel, and that is to go straight on through to the end of the thing.

I knew nothing about writing a novel when I started *The Sun Also Rises*, and so wrote too fast and each day to the point of complete exhaustion. The first draft was very bad . . . I had to rewrite it completely. But in the re-writing I learned much.

We have had writers of rhetoric who had the good fortune to find a little, in a chronicle of another man and from voyaging, of how things, actual things can be, whales for instance, and this knowledge is wrapped in the rhetoric like plums in a pudding. Occasionally it is there, alone, unwrapped in pudding, and it is good. This is Melville.

All good books are alike in that they are truer than if they had really happened and after you are finished reading one you will feel that all that happened to you and afterwards it all belongs to you; the good and the bad, the ecstasy, the remorse and sorrow, the people and the places and how the weather was. If you can get so you can give that to people, then you are a writer.

I have a great deal of fondness and admiration for the earth, and not a lot for my generation and care little about vanities.

Don't do anything too bloody long.

The Sun Also Rises was not meant to be a hollow or bitter satire, but a tragedy with the earth abiding forever as the hero.

There really is, to me anyway, very great glamour in life—and places and all sorts of things.

I've known some very wonderful people who even though they were going directly to the grave (which is what makes any story a tragedy if carried out until the end) managed to put up a very fine performance en route.

I want to write as well as I can and learn as I go along. At the same time I have my life which I enjoy and which is a good life.

When a man feels at home, outside of where he's born, is where he's meant to go.

Writing is competitive. The writer must therefore discover, by selective reading, what he has to beat or to equal.

Aside from its help in the establishment of standards, writing succeeds or fails according to whether or not it conveys to the reader a sense of "the way it was" at the time and place the novelist has chosen to write about.

Because all great writers appear to share in the ability to involve the reader's imagination, we have been there in the books. Where we go, if we are any good, there you can go as we have been.

I feel, however modest the effects may be, that I am fighting for the return to the full use of the language.

I cannot read other naturalists unless they are being extremely accurate and not literary.

Three American writers for whom I have expressed admiration are: James, Stephen Crane, and Twain. This is not a preferential order. These are the good writers but that is not the order they're good in. There is no order for good writers.

The Red Badge of Courage by Stephen Crane is one of the finest books of your literature, a boy's dream of war that is truer to how war is than any war the boy who wrote it would ever live to see.

Twain's notable ability to project in ostensibly simple language the essence of active experience is the quality that endears *Huckleberry Finn* to me.

We destroy writers in many ways. First, economically. They make money . . . increase their standard of living and . . . are caught. They have to write to keep up their establishment, their wives, and so on, and they write slop . . . not on purpose, but because it is hurried. Then, once they have betrayed themselves, they justify it and you get more slop. Whether through women or the desire for money, self-betrayal is what kills a man before he has lived out his time. Women and money are nothing but instruments and agents: they exist, sometimes passively, sometimes oppressively, to help the individual writer in his moral self-destruction. If he surrenders, the fault is his own.

A writer ought always to write as if he were going to die at the end of a book.

In a war you can never admit, even to yourself, that it is lost. Because when you admit it is lost, you are beaten.

I love to write. Writing is a trade I am still learning. I'm apprenticed out at it until I die. Dopes can say you mastered it. But I know nobody ever mastered it, or could not have been better.

The hardest thing in the world to do is to write straight honest prose on human beings. First you have to know the subject; then you have to know how to write. Both take a lifetime to learn, and anybody is cheating who takes politics as a way out. It is too easy. All the outs are too easy, and the thing itself is too hard to do.

The writer's standard of fidelity to the truth should be so high that his invention, out of his experience, should produce a truer account than anything factual can be.

The first and final thing you have to do in this world is to last in it and not be smashed by it, and it is the same way with your work. This is at once a rule for the conduct of life and a rule for the conduct of art; to last, and to do work that will last.

I have taken as my ruling idea the determination never to write a false line.

Fanatics do not make good friends for a cause.

If a man writes clearly enough anyone can see if he fakes.

At one time I was so depressed by the state of the world I seriously thought about devoting all my time to doing something about it. But instead I decided to write as well as I could for the rest of my life.

I know the failings of my fellow writers, but a writer should no more be expected to give such information to the public than a doctor or a lawyer would be expected to tell the strengths and weaknesses of his fellow professionals. Writers should stick together, like wolves or gypsies.

Writing a novel is, for me, an exploration into unknown territory. I feel my way, living with the story and characters as they develop a life of their own.

I am ruthless when editing my own work. The test of a book is how much good stuff you can throw away. Anything that does not have the ring of hard authoritative truth goes into the wastebasket. I use the oldest words in the English language when I write. People think I'm an ignorant man who doesn't know the ten-dollar words. I know the ten-dollar words. There are older, better words, and if you arrange them in the proper combination, you make it stick.

The hardest thing is for the writer to survive and get his work done. This is mainly because the time available is so short and the temptations not to work are so strong.

A man my age has no time to lose.

I like to listen. I have learned a great deal from listening carefully. Most people never listen.

The best time to stop is when you are going good and when you know what will happen next. If you do that every day when you are writing a novel you will never get stuck.

I won the title in the twenties and defended it in the thirties and the forties. I am not afraid to defend it in the fifties.

A good writer should know as near everything as possible. Naturally he will not. A great enough writer seems to be born with knowledge. But he really is not; he has only been born with the ability to learn in a quicker ratio to the passage of time than other men and without conscious application, and with an intelligence to accept or reject what is already presented as knowledge.

A writer who appreciates the seriousness of writing so little that he is anxious to make people see he is formally educated, cultured or well-bred is merely a popinjay. And this too remember: a serious writer is not to be confounded with a solemn writer. A serious writer may be a hawk or a buzzard or even a popinjay, but a solemn writer is always a bloody owl.

We, as citizens, are governed by fear and guided by frustration, using a non-corrected compass.

A writer's problem does not change. It is always how to write truly and having found out what is true to project it in such a way that it becomes a part of the experience of the person who reads it. As to forms of government, really good writers seem to have been rewarded under almost any system of government which they could tolerate. There is only one form of government that cannot produce good writers, and that system is fascism. For fascism is a lie told by bullies. A writer who will not lie cannot live and work under fascism.

Is Love possible? Every man knows that for himself. For me it is.

LIVING IN THIS AGE OF ACHIEVEMENT

by C. W. Hunnicutt

THIS IS AN EXCITING TIME TO BE ALIVE. Have you ever considered the exciting periods of human achievement? Which would you choose as the most exciting? Would it be the time of new ideas with Pericles in ancient Athens? Men were catching a thrilling new vision of democracy, freedom, and a good life with abundant living—though maybe not for the slaves. Would you select the time of Alexander? Some have said that he died of acute oversuccess. He had conquered nearly all the world he knew about, while he was still a very young man. Or perhaps you like Imperial Rome at its height. That was indeed an exciting period.

Do you lean toward the time of the first Queen Elizabeth? Think what it must have been like. Gunpowder had helped to end feudalism. The printing press was helping to spread ideas, the compass had made navigation easier, and a whole new world was beckoning over the horizon. In England Shakespeare was writing plays so good that they still interest us. Francis Drake, with his fellow Sea Dogs, was terrorizing the all-powerful Spanish. It must have been an exciting time.

Or perhaps you like our own frontier days and the opening of the West. There was the hope and promise of a wonderful new life.

All of these periods, exciting as they were, pale into insignificance compared with today.

Westward movement? The westward movement of the past decade makes that of the 1800's seem small. From 1850-1870 the population of California increased by 472,000. It has been increasing by almost that amount during each year since World War II.

Ideas? We have the old ideas plus all the new ones. Adventure and the thrill of living dangerously? We have them. An H bomb could descend on us at any moment; and our highway statistics indicate ample danger.

Perhaps you like to travel. Never before has it been so easy. The Pilgrims required fifty-five days to cross the Atlantic. You could leave here tonight and be in Europe tomorrow—or in the Orient a day or two later. You can drive your car directly to Alaska or almost to Guatemala and live comfortably throughout your trip.

Looking ahead, we are but a short time from space travel. Perhaps one of you will be aboard the first space ship to explore the other side of the moon. Within the lifetime of some of us has come the automobile and the airplane. These have changed our whole outlook on travel. Almost certainly within the lifetime of young people will come some form of travel far beyond the earth's atmosphere. That will further expand our ideas of travel.

Consider for a moment, man's quest for power. Through unnumbered centuries we had to depend upon human muscles to do all of our work. Then we learned to use animal muscles and more recently wind and falling water. Many towns and cities all over

our land are where they are because a waterfall could turn a mill.

Then came chemical power, the power of stored up sunshine; and our country grew rich with it. Coal and oil powered the development of modern industry. Today coal and oil are being consumed at a fantastic rate. Until very recently we were rightly worried that we soon would exhaust our abundance of these stored-up fuels. Our problems in the Near East today are largely centered on the future of oil.

But even oil is rapidly becoming obsolete as power. Within the past decade or so we have entered a new era, the most fantastic era of all times. With atomic energy there is literally no potential limit to our power resources. There is enough for everybody. We need only to learn how to use this power; and we are learning very rapidly. For the first time anywhere in the world, the British produced atomic electricity in commercial quantities. Uranium is so compact and so powerful a fuel that it costs almost nothing to transport. It keeps giving energy year after year. How far has the Nautilus, the atomic submarine, gone by now without refueling? Uranium is almost unlimited. Ordinary country granite contains uranium for thousands of years to come. There is the problem, though, of disposing of growing quantities of dangerous, semi-permanent, radioactive by-products of fission.

We appear to be on the threshold of a break-through in the controlled use of hydrogen fusion to produce power. The ocean itself can become an unlimited source of fuel, leaving no troublesome by-products. Before too long, moreover, we will know how to use energy directly from sunshine.

Think what this means to power-starved countries like India. For power means abundance. With adequate power, deserts can be watered from the ocean. There need never be a shortage of food. All other abundance, too, depends upon power—power to transport materials, to drive factories, and to do the work of the world.

Today in most American factories, human muscles are obsolete. We depend upon mechanical power to do the heavy work. Human brains, too, are rapidly becoming obsolete for routine assignments. Electronic controls of one sort or another work more accurately and tirelessly than can human brains. These developments will free increasing numbers of people to do our truly creative work such as teaching.

We are entering an era of automation when, for the first time in all of the development of our earth, there can theoretically be enough of everything for everybody. All can live as no king or rich man could live in the past. We know how to produce enough food, clothing, shelter, television sets, cars, air conditioners, and so on to supply *all* needs. There need be no poverty anywhere in this millennium of the near future. No country need go to war to achieve a fair share of the earth's riches.

This is a wonderful picture. But there is a corollary. In this world of ours, with privilege goes responsibility. With great privilege, such as we in America enjoy, goes great responsibility. The whole world is watching us. We have great power. Will we use it wisely? We are engaged in the greatest struggle of all times, with a powerful, ruthless and intelligent enemy. Both sides are seeking the loyalty of the uncommitted peoples of Africa and the Orient. These peoples will probably decide the outcome in the long run. They hold the balance of power in numbers and resources. If we selfishly attempt just to build our own wealth and privilege without working to develop the economy of the have-not peoples of the world, we are likely to lose. If we continue to deny equality to colored people while the vast majority of people in the world are colored, we will not attract their loyalty. If we continue to be identified primarily with the colonial powers of the world, we will lose the loyalty of Oriental people. After all, we were the first country in the world to rebel successfully against a European power, and the colonies of Asia had expected us to help them. They had thrilled to our Declaration of Independence and our Bill of Rights. Washington and Jefferson for generations have been heroes throughout the Orient. The Orientals are not so sure of us now. They wonder how many people in America really believe in our Declaration of Independence. Who in America do they identify themselves with—those whose skin is light, or those with color like their own?

What does all of this mean for each of us personally, and for the schools of our country?

Ours is a great responsibility. In our hands rests much of the future. By the time a child finishes the elementary school, a great many of his most important decisions have already been made. Is he automatically and without reason suspicious of people who are different from himself? Or is he reasonably free from prejudice? Does he have a driving commitment to the ideal of human integrity and freedom—for *all*? Does he accept responsibility for carrying through his share of life's work? Is he accustomed to using thoughtful intelligence in meeting his problems of everyday living? The kind of person he is going to be for life has been fairly well established. Let us examine a few implications for our schools.

What are we teaching in our social studies? Are we still spending most of our time in a Narcissistic study of the glories of American history and geography—like a Buddha proudly contemplating the beauties of his navel? Or are we beginning to spend more time on those people who constitute the great majority of the human race? What are we teaching about China, Russia, and India? Have these topics become so dangerous that we teach only part truths or avoid them entirely lest we be misinterpreted? If so, we are criminally negligent. We are trying to keep our children in a dream world of unreality. We are failing to help them prepare for the responsibilities and power they will inherit.

We have an obligation to help our children learn how other people think. What are the things the Chinese, the Arabs, the Indonesians, the Hindus want in life? What are they prepared to fight for? Are there things we consider unimportant that are crucial to them and vice versa? One thing we do know. The white man's casual and long-standing assumption of superiority throughout these areas is likely to exact a ghastly price. This heritage hurts our cause enormously. Others naturally resent it and often have developed an indiscriminate and bitter hatred of all people not like themselves. A little rational respect and rational fear are in order.

The American economic system, moreover, enlists little loyalty among people chronically undernourished. For centuries many of them have been the victims of what was called capitalism. Perhaps we would think alike if we both had the same heritage.

We must become competent in seeing through other people's eyes if we are to survive. By seeing how things look to others we have a chance of helping them see how things look to us, too. Our children can learn at least how to co-exist.

How do we help children learn to "see through other's eyes?" Role playing, socio-drama, psychodrama are becoming an integral part of the social living curriculum in our elementary schools. As we help them grow in this skill we shall be giving them an invaluable technique of survival and betterment. Looking through the eyes of other cultures does not mean destroying our own values. The perspective of a fresh viewpoint may strengthen our assurance. There is a tendency among children and adults to accept as "right" whatever exists, especially if it favors oneself. Examination in the light of a broader and higher morality will strengthen our assurance in some values and weaken it in others. We at least will know better what things are most worth struggling to preserve.

What are the implications for competition and cooperation? Our children can learn that we grow up in a world of both. Our heritage is one of growing cooperation and interdependence. We all work in

one way or another. Policemen, firemen, postmen, and others, are not "community helpers" in a never-never land of gooey unreality. They are workers who earn a living by doing something of value to others, even as you and I. Each nation similarly contributes to a world economy and works to "earn a living." Our children learn to work cooperatively on committees and teams; and perhaps as cooperating members of teams they may learn to compete effectively with other teams.

In all of this they are developing a healthy and realistic self-respect. Each knows that he is an effective, competent, respected member of a group. He respects himself and others; they reciprocate.

What geography are we teaching? Are we helping children to see what it means to be living at the bottom of an ocean of air? The oceans of water once were barriers. When men developed ships, the oceans became avenues connecting all seaports. Now that men have craft to navigate the ocean of air, each spot on earth is a port of entry from every other spot on the earth's surface. Physical barriers no longer exist. The arctic, once a barrier, is now a short-cut between continents. We must speed up our adjustment to this reality.

Air currents suddenly are of the greatest concern. Nuclear pollution will not stay put, but goes with the currents. What happens in one place now concerns everybody. The American Revolutionary slogan "We must hang together or all hang separately" has become worldwide in meaning. A United Nations or its equivalent is now vital to our very survival.

Another implication of this exciting new era comes right home to every community in our land. It used to be that young people of ambition often had to move away from farm, village, or town and move on to an urban center to progress. In the big city was power, wealth and glamor. Small places could not support important industries. They could not compete with the lower transportation and power costs of the metropolis.

All of this is changing. Universal cheap power and transportation are increasing the trend toward decentralization of industry. There is every reason why the best young brains can plan to build a happy, profitable lifetime right in their home towns.

Of course, they will go off to college for the necessary training—and perhaps will complete their military service—but they can come back to build up their home towns. Working with others to analyze its needs they can make each home town an even better place to live. Profitable industries can be attracted or built. New jobs can be created out of new ideas and inventions.

Is the community too hot or too cold? Air conditioning creates a "perfect" climate anywhere. Is it remote? No place can be remote with today's rapid transportation and instant communications. Is it provincial? The same magazines, advertisements, columnists, movies, music, etc., reach every spot in our land. Television brings increasingly good entertainment right into the home. There are the advantages of big city life without the loss of small town values. They can eat their cake and have it, too.

Schools have a vital role in this development. It is perhaps epitomized by the concept of "Community School." Here the school takes its place as the instrument by which a community consciously betters itself. The school is the one institution of a community deliberately devoted to the use of intelligence in solving life's problems. Community analysis and improvement are studied by both the young people and their elders. This process has been going on for years now in small, backward communities of the Philippines, and elsewhere. It is time for adoption by schools in *less* backward areas.

Another aspect of today's world has not yet been adequately recognized. This is the necessity for every American to make the most of himself. Each child's greatest destiny is to use *all* of his abilities to the full. This is not a pious hope or mere exhortation. It is a profound and somewhat bitter obligation. Casual laissez faire is no longer acceptable.

For the first time in our history, we in the United States are engaged in a struggle with an enemy that outnumbers us. Russia and China together outnumber the committed parts of the free world. Nor are they lacking in natural resources and technical skills. The only way we can possibly win is to use our most powerful weapons to the full, our brain power—the brain power of each and every one of our children and youth. Each must be challenged to his capacity.

The Russians are turning out many more engineers than we are, and they are well-trained. They are educating more physicians and other scientists. They are preparing and paying well the school teachers and college professors upon whom the future of any country depends. Only if each generation is better educated than the previous one, can a country move ahead. The Chinese, with their ancient respect for education, can be expected to emulate the Russians in this as soon as their resources permit.

We must help each child as never before to make the most of himself, to tackle the tough subjects, to keep studying and learning. We must ourselves do a better job of teaching arithmetic so it makes some sense and challenges the thoughtful. Too often we ruin the potential engineer, mathematician, or scientist by meaningless repetition and purposeless drudgery. All too many of our high school and college students with adequate abilities are avoiding mathematics. Their school arithmetic taught them to doubt their own competence to learn in the area of mathematics.

For once, patriotism and self-interest are identical. Each person has an obligation to keep studying and learning whether he goes to college or not. He becomes more valuable to society and earns more for himself and his future family. In addition, he is assisting in the long-range defense of democracy. We can survive only if everyone keeps on developing himself to the full. This is too wonderful, dangerous, and exciting a time for loafers or free riders.

One way we can help is to increase our teaching efficiency. If we but put into everyday practice what is now known from research, we would reduce greatly the time needed for teaching the three R's, and have more time for other important parts of the curriculum.

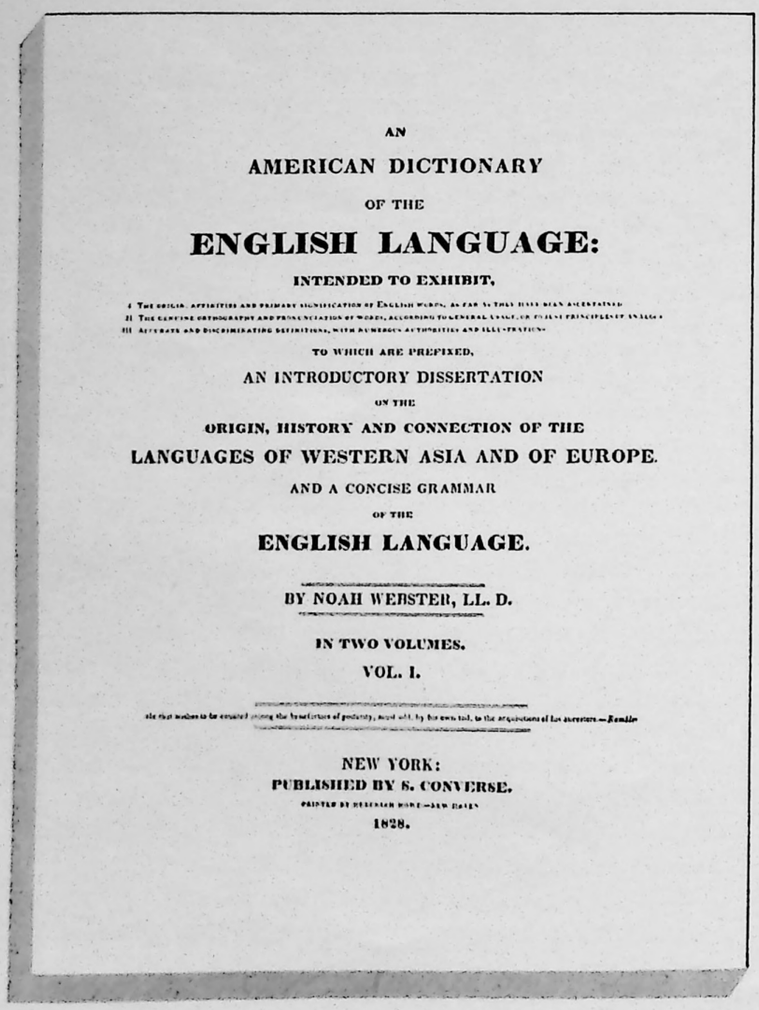
We are fortunate, also, in having powerful teaching tools being manufactured. Cost has prevented the adequate use of any of them in our public schools, but they are ready for us when we have the funds. The motion picture, film strip, slide, and opaque projector are obvious. Less obvious is the everyday use of magnetic recorders in all rooms to speed up the learning of all forms of oral communication—reading, discussion, reports, speech form, singing, etc. We have some indication that writing quality and form is also improved if appropriate auditory imagery is learned through the use of magnetic recorders. It is difficult to know yet what to expect from closed circuit television.

During this half-century, there has been greater change than during thousands of years in other periods of history. During this period has come fantastic and increasing technical invention. This was speeded up by two world wars and a great depression. The atomic submarine was a silly dream but a few years ago; a reality today; a commonplace soon. The atomic airplane is on its way. Change is moving faster and faster. What do the next decades hold for us? And what of education? As seldom before in history, people everywhere are interested in education. We are being criticized and defended and analyzed. Are we keeping pace? Are we living up to our obligations and opportunities? Should we be charting new courses? Is it time for great new steps forward? If so, what are they? We are in a period of ferment comparable to that of the 1920's. What will emerge? ♦

Noah Webster.

THE MAN WHO WROTE THE DICTIONARY

by Everett E. Thompson



AN

AMERICAN DICTIONARY

OF THE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE:

INTENDED TO EXHIBIT,

I. The origin, affinities and primary signification of English words, as far as they have been ascertained.
II. The genuine orthography and pronunciation of words, according to general usage, or to just principles of analogy.
III. Accurate and discriminating definitions, with numerous authorities and illustrations.

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,

AN INTRODUCTORY DISSERTATION

ON THE

ORIGIN, HISTORY AND CONNECTION OF THE

LANGUAGES OF WESTERN ASIA AND OF EUROPE.

AND A CONCISE GRAMMAR

OF THE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

BY NOAH WEBSTER, LL. D.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

He that wishes to be created among the benefactors of posterity, must add, by his own toil, to the acquisitions of his ancestors.—Rambler

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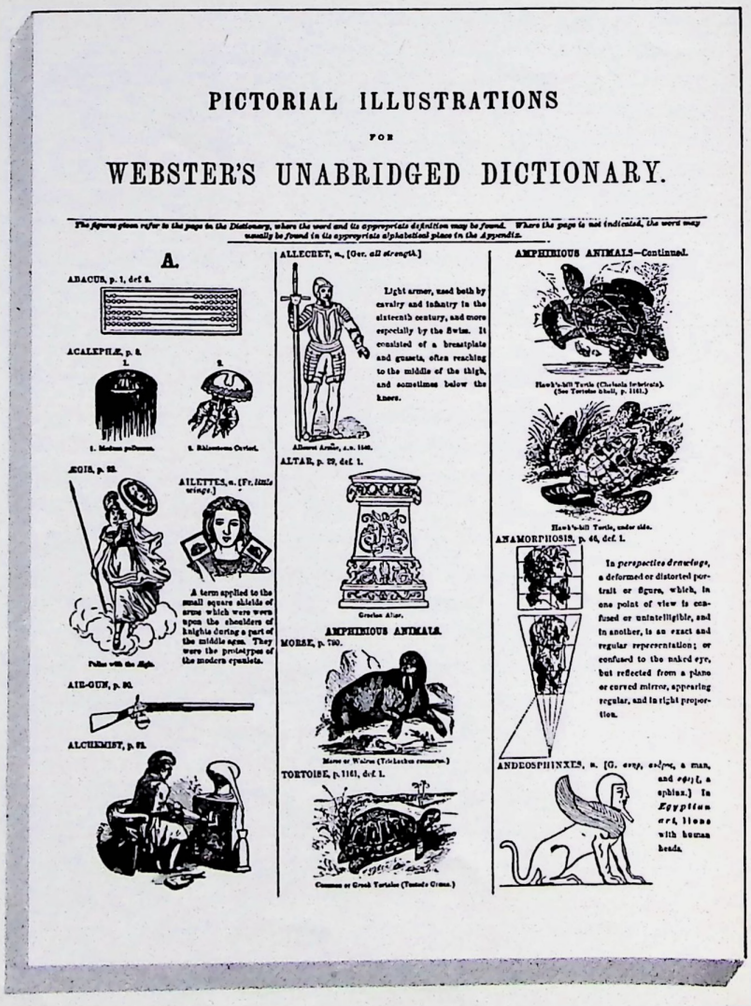


PICTORIAL ILLUSTRATIONS

FOR

WEBSTER'S UNABRIDGED DICTIONARY.

The figures given refer to the page in the Dictionary, where the word and its appropriate definition may be found. Where the page is not indicated, the word may usually be found in its appropriate alphabetical place in the Appendix.

A.

ABACUS, p. 1, def. 2.

ACALEPHÆ, p. 2.

1. Medusa pellucens. 2. Rhizostoma Cuvieri.

ÆGIS, p. 22.

Pallas with the Ægis.

AILETTES, n. [Fr. little wings.]

A term applied to the small square shields of arms which were worn upon the shoulders of knights during a part of the middle ages. They were the prototypes of the modern epaulets.

AIR-GUN, p. 30.

ALCHEMIST, p. 32.

ALLECRET, n., [Ger. all strength.]

Light armor, used both by cavalry and infantry in the sixteenth century, and more especially by the Swiss. It consisted of a breastplate and gussets, often reaching to the middle of the thigh, and sometimes below the knees.

Allecret Armor, A.D. 1548.

ALTAR, p. 29, def. 1.

Grecian Altar.

AMPHIBIOUS ANIMALS.

MORSE, p. 780.

Morse or Walrus (Trichechus rosmarus.)

TORTOISE, p. 1161, def. 1.

Common or Greek Tortoise (Tortoise Graeca.)

AMPHIBIOUS ANIMALS—Continued.

Hawk's-bill Turtle (Chelonia imbricata). (See Tortoise Shell, p. 1161.)

Hawk's-bill Turtle, under side.

ANAMORPHOSIS, p. 46, def. 1.

In *perspective drawings*, a deformed or distorted portrait or figure, which, in one point of view is confused or unintelligible, and in another, is an exact and regular representation; or confused to the naked eye, but reflected from a plane or curved mirror, appearing regular, and in right proportion.

ANDROSPHINXES, n. [G. ανηρ, ανδρος, a man, and σφιγξ, a sphinx.] In *Egyptian art*, lions with human heads.

THE OBSERVANCE OF THE BICENTENNIAL of the birth of any great American presents an opportunity to look a little more closely at his achievements and to appraise his role in the history of his country. Did he change in any way the course of events or influence the thinking or the social habits of its people?

Thousands today use Noah Webster's name with perhaps little understanding of its full significance: "Look it up in Webster." "Webster gives this meaning for the word." "The law courts relied on Webster for their interpretation of the term." Such general recognition of the scholarly attainments of an American born two hundred years ago suggests that all of us today learn more about what the name *Webster* stands for.

Noah Webster was born in West Hartford, Conn., on October 16, 1758. His ancestry was one of which he could be proud. His father, a respectable farmer and justice of the peace, was a descendant of John Webster, from Warwickshire, England, one of the original settlers in Hartford, and for a period governor of the state of Connecticut. His mother, a superior woman, was a descendant of William Bradford, the second governor of Plymouth Colony.

As a boy, like the other sons of those days who lived in an agricultural region, he spent long hours in labor on the farm. To the rudiments of an education that he received in the district school, he added self-instruction from reading through the long winter evenings at the family fireside. He had had from his early youth a keen interest in the English language, as then written and spoken. This was evident under the private tutoring of the Reverend Nathaniel Perkins of West Hartford and as a student at Yale College in the years 1774 to 1778, as well as in the following years of his varying activities of writing pamphlets, editing newspapers, and in general campaigning for uniform copyright laws.

In 1776 he accompanied a brother, who was returning to join the army on Lake Champlain, into the less settled parts of New England. The hardships of the soldiers, and to a lesser degree his own, on this journey, left a deep impression on his mind. Webster himself engaged in no military service during the Revolutionary War. As a youth of nineteen in 1777 he marched as a volunteer with his two brothers, in a unit commanded by their father, into New York State—this at the time when the news of Burgoyne's southward march was received. However, before they reached Albany, word that Burgoyne had surrendered served to disband the group, and Webster returned home.

On completing his course at Yale he was presented by his father with an eight-dollar bill of Continental currency and told that he must shift for himself. To a young man of those days, with a college education, that meant teaching school, and this he did, first at Hartford and later in Goshen, New York. These experiences soon brought before the young Webster's inquisitive mind one of the serious problems in education of those early days. Before the Revolution the schoolbooks in use in the colonies were almost wholly English. The success of the War of Independence, however, brought it about that not only were these English products almost impossible to obtain but the sentiments expressed in them, with allusions to the king, to parliament, etc., were quite unacceptable to the citizens of the new republic. At the time when Webster was teaching in Goshen, the textbook in use for the learning of the mother tongue was a *New Guide to the English Tongue*, by Thomas Dilworth, published in 1740. He immediately perceived its faults and unsuitability, and soon determined to write an American text for American schools. This text, *The Grammatical Institute of the English Language*, better known as the *Blue-Backed Speller*, was completed and published in 1783 and achieved a phenomenal success. By the end of the next year, 5,000 copies had been printed. Its sale gradually mounted into the millions and at the time of Webster's death in 1843 not far from 40,000,000 copies had been placed in circulation. Although somewhat revised after that date, the speller had still a good sale, with a total of more than 70,000,000 copies distributed.

We may well pause to reflect on the tremendous power this small book exerted in those first years of the struggling young republic. At the very beginning it took its place along with the family Bible and the household almanac, and was second only to the Bible in its wholesome and elevating influence. As a purely elementary textbook, only the McGuffey Readers of the 1840 and 1850 decades, so widely used in the Middle West, can compare in their impression on the youth of the country. The moral training of the book was effective, and although such was not Webster's primary aim in its preparation, it had a great deal to do with the unexampled continuous success of the speller. In the formative period of the history of our country the idea of careful and systematic attention to spelling and to the use of language as a basis for a liberal education was everywhere encouraged by the speller, and it is not too much to say that largely due to Webster's influence we owe the fact that our American English, both spoken and written, is homogeneous throughout the entire extent of the United States and so little broken up into provincial dialects.

Webster himself says, in one of his essays: "The spelling book does more to form the language of a nation than all other books." He describes it as "an elementary book for facilitating the acquisition of our vernacular tongue, and for correcting a vicious pronunciation which prevailed extensively among the common people of this country." These statements show that already the youth, not long out of college, was lexicographically minded. His keen ambition at that time was to bring about in his own country the use of a language different from that of England. "We have thrown off the shackles of her government, why not her language also?" He urged a uniformity in orthography and in pronunciation. He at first contemplated many radical reforms which he was never able to carry out, but which were modified considerably as he advanced in his lexicographical work.

Fortunately he did not attempt to introduce many of these extreme forms into his speller. A grammar was completed soon after the speller and still later a reader was published. The grammar, though not a success commercially, embodied sound opinions, views that are held today among scholars.

The years immediately following the completion of the speller were busy ones for Webster. Difficulties in securing a printer and a copyright took him on trips to Princeton, Trenton, Philadelphia, and Hartford. He found a printer in Hartford, and the first edition of five thousand was struck off there. But the matter of copyright loomed as a much greater difficulty, and Webster as a loyal citizen, keenly interested in education, became convinced that he ought to do something about it.

In May 1785 he set out with the purpose of inducing the various states to grant letters of copyright or at least some protection to authors of books. It was a long journey—mostly on horseback but diversified by boat and "coaching stage." Often the roads were terrible, he notes in his diary, and the entry for May 18, 1785 relates: "Set out for Alexandria; stage waggon breaks down . . . I curse all stage waggons and return to town . . . Loiter about & do little, but hire a horse." He was thirteen months away from home. After the completion of his speller the questions of spelling, pronunciation, grammar, and all the details of why and how people of various localities talked as they did were of prime interest to Webster. He observed closely all these differences, made copious notes, and attained a knowledge of American habits of speech, as contrasted with those of English, of great value to him later.

All this was to his good as a lexicographer, but his goal of uniform and adequate copyright laws in the United States was not won until

many years later, and after the expenditure of much time and effort. Webster visited Richmond, Charleston, Wilmington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Washington, and on occasions when the state legislatures were not in session he employed his time writing and giving lectures. At first these were attended by only a few but, as his reputation as a lecturer spread, he was later favored with larger groups. He met with criticism, some of it quite bitter, and in his relations with the lawmaking bodies he was often received with apathy and indifference.

On his way to Richmond, Webster visited Mount Vernon in November 1785, and passed the night there. He discussed with General Washington various educational and political matters and the acquaintance led to a further exchange of letters. Results as to copyright laws, however, were very meager at first but Webster never relaxed in his efforts in this cause. The first U. S. statute on copyright (1790) superseded the state laws then in effect; on the revisions of 1802 and 1831 Webster's influence is noteworthy.

In variety of interests and versatility of achievement there is probably no person in the early history of the United States, except Benjamin Franklin, who surpassed Noah Webster. In statecraft Washington, Jefferson, Hamilton, and a few others were Webster's superiors, although in this field, especially through the publication in 1785 of his *Sketches of American Policy*, his influence was widely felt, since in all probability this was the first exposition through the press of the need for a new constitution of the United States. Among his other interests were the law, the profession for which he had studied to prepare himself, and journalism, in which for several years (1793 to 1798) he served as an editor of daily or semiweekly papers in New York. In the later years of the eighteenth century he published many pamphlets in support of Jay's treaty with Great Britain and on such subjects as the Federal Constitution, rights of neutrals, and banking institutions and insurance offices. In 1799 he published a two-volume *History of Pestilential Diseases*, a work remarkable for its learning. His interest in scientific subjects was keen and at all times he was an active supporter of the church and informed on theological questions.

During a prolonged period of Webster's travel to the South he remained in Philadelphia—this was in 1786-88. He taught for a while in the Episcopal Academy and he lectured frequently on his favorite educational and philosophical subjects. Here he made the acquaintance of Benjamin Franklin. With him he had previously corresponded and the two scholars exchanged ideas about reforming English spelling and planning for a new alphabet that would represent sounds more precisely. They had much in agreement.

Amid all these varied occupations, however, he never laid aside his first interest in philology nor his plans for enlarging upon his *Institute*. In 1798, on returning to New Haven to live, he devoted his time almost exclusively to the preparation of his first dictionary, a work of some 400 pages, published in 1806. But the goal of his achievement had been only approached in this work. After the publication in 1807 of a grammar of the English language, he began in the following year the task that was to absorb the greater part of his life—the making of his *American Dictionary of the English Language*. From 1808 to the date of its publication in 1828 he gave himself perseveringly to this labor. Although Webster was at all times more or less closely identified with his alma mater, Yale, after a few years of labor on the dictionary he began to realize that the conditions of living in New Haven were not favorable to its completion. Not only were there too many distractions—civic, social, and political—but also his large family meant ever-increasing expense.

In September 1812 Webster and his family removed to Amherst, Mass., then a small farming community, and settled in a large, half-finished double house on a gentle eminence in the center of town. Here he found a real pleasure in completing the house thus acquired, in working in his garden and orchard, and especially in enjoying the quiet retreat favorable to the pursuit of the arduous task he had set himself. There were congenial friends among the men of the town; but in spite of the many benefits he enjoyed by residence in a restful locality, the work on his dictionary was never slighted or relinquished. And perhaps the most remarkable fact about it all was that throughout his entire residence in Amherst practically his sole income was derived from the royalties on the sale of his speller.

In 1814 the Amherst Academy was opened; incorporated in 1816 with the help of Webster, who was in 1814 and 1815 the town's representative in the Massachusetts House, the school was successful from the very first and entered upon its honorable career of nearly fifty years. During its early period Webster served on its board of trustees and acted as its vice-president from 1818 to 1820 and as its temporary president in 1820-1821.

Although steadfast in his labors in lexicography, Webster's mind was so filled with the passion for education that he could not refrain from taking a very active part in anything connected with the cause, particularly in the institutions of the town where he lived and where his children were being educated. Says Prof. William S. Tyler: "The fire of his enthusiasm helped to kindle the desires of the townspeople. He talked in private, he harangued in public, he showed the advantage and pressed the necessity of it."

The success of the academy aroused the trustees to look forward to further accomplishments and soon the idea of establishing a charitable collegiate institution in the town was originated. The academy trustees and loyal townspeople zealously solicited and collected donations to a fund—the Charity Fund—of $50,000 which formed for many years the financial basis of Amherst College.

In the labor of securing this fund Noah Webster was of very great assistance. He could give but little in cash contributions but he did grant freely of his time and energy. On August 9, 1820 the foundations of the first building of the college were nearly completed and the ceremony of laying the cornerstone observed. Webster says in his diary, "It fell to me to make a short address standing on the stone," and later in 1821 he presided at the inauguration of the first president.

But in spite of his duties as a member of the state legislature and his activities in connection with the academy and Amherst College, the steady demand on Webster's time and strength during this ten years' residence in Amherst was the writing of his dictionary. For a long time he had been convinced of the need of such a new reference work. He was extremely critical of Dr. Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary* (1755), then still considered the chief authority in England. He announced that he would compile "for my fellow citizens a dictionary which shall exhibit a far more correct state of the language than any work of this kind." He was sure that he could do a better job than Johnson had done; his book would have more words in it, it would be based on American usage, and it would be a great improvement in the fields of definition and etymology. He was much interested in etymology, a science that at that time had not advanced far in the scholars' language world, and he spent much time in searching out the origins of the words he was defining. He has been pictured as standing before the semicircular desk piled high with nearly a score of dictionaries of other tongues, trying patiently to trace the origins of words which in the light of the philological knowledge then extant could not in large measure be correctly discovered, referring to the copious notes made in his studies and journeys of earlier years—altogether an enlightening example of scholarly perseverance and accomplishment. Edward Channing, in his *History of the United States*, has this comment: "The picture of this solitary scholar perambulating the periphery of a table made in the form of a hollow circle and covered with

dictionaries in Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, and all the known languages, working steadfastly for twenty-eight years at one object and succeeding in his self-imposed task, is one of the most inspiring in the annals of American literary endeavor."

During these years Webster in his many journeys throughout New England was partly concerned with promoting the sale of his speller, which provided the principal source of income for his family of seven through a royalty of one-half cent per copy. State laws were not so strict in those days and pirated editions of successful texts were common. By his own efforts, he endeavored to reduce such losses in his personal financial returns.

Webster took delight in planning how to polish off the rough corners of the spelling and pronunciation of the English language in the United States. He and Franklin had discussed such improvements in earlier years and on many points they agreed. Some of their suggestions were untenable as we now view them; others were impractical; but many were sensible, were adopted in the course of years, and are now firmly fixed. (Such, for example, are our American spellings of *honor, color,* instead of *honour, colour; center* for *centre;* the dropping of the final *k* in such words as *public, music;* the use of single consonants in derivative forms of certain verbs as *traveled, canceled,* etc. Webster also had definite ideas on certain desirable changes in pronunciation, many of which are now a part of our speech.) But as he traveled about the rural districts his keenness to instruct was balanced by his inquisitiveness to learn the local usages—why did people pronounce certain words in such a fashion, why did they persist in retaining spellings in the English way, what did the local idioms and colloquialisms in use mean? This questioning he had followed in his earlier journeys in the South and the results of such searchings formed the basis of his equipment as a lexicographer. Early in 1822 Webster returned to New Haven, where work on the dictionary continued.

Webster's most ambitious journey was that of 1824, when in June he left with his son William for a visit to France and England. Sailing from New York on the ship *Edward Quesnel,* they landed at Le Havre and proceeded to Paris. In his labors Webster had exhausted the resources of American libraries and had now come to perfect his *Dictionary* (at that time nearly completed), record new terms in science, and visit the famous places of the city. He was astounded at the size of the great French library—the Bibliothèque du Roi. Father and son remained at the French capital somewhat more than two months and then crossed to England, where Webster made arrangements in Cambridge to spend the winter and to work in the university library. There he held pretty closely to his task, although before his stay of five months was up he had made many friends in the university circles.

On the whole his visit had been both pleasant and profitable. In a passage from his diary that has often been quoted, Webster in his sixty-seventh year recorded his feelings on reaching the end of his long task of compiling the dictionary: "I finished writing my dictionary in January, 1825, at my lodgings in Cambridge, England. When I had come to the last word, I was seized with a trembling, which made it somewhat difficult to hold my pen steady for writing. The cause seems to have been the thought that I might not then live to finish the work, or the thought that I was so near the end of my labors. But I summoned strength to finish the last word, and then walking about the room a few minutes, I recovered." *Zygomatic* was that last word, which now in the current Merriam-Webster unabridged, WEBSTER'S NEW INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY, *Second Edition,* is *Zyzzogeton,* nearly a page beyond. In 1828, in Webster's seventieth year, his life work, the *American Dictionary of the English Language,* in two quarto volumes, came off the press. It had only a limited sale, insufficient for many years to produce any income.

The later years of Webster's life were spent in New Haven, always in some lexicographical or other literary pursuit. "He was a sturdy, upright man," says Horace Scudder, in his biography, "with the courtesy of an old Federalist, and his figure was a familiar one in the streets of New Haven. It was there he died, May 28, 1843, in the eighty-fifth year of his age, surrounded by his family, and cheerful with the sense of a full life and of Christian trust and expectation."

In any estimate of Webster's character it is easy to let the rugged Christian qualities of the man blind us to the human faults he possessed. Noah Webster was somewhat vain, fond of the ladies, and fastidious in his dress. He was by no means a retiring or self-effacing person, but was all too ready to prompt and advise and instruct anyone he met, scarcely allowing for the possibility that other persons might have had ideas also. In his youth a Connecticut acquaintance said of him, "He certainly does not want understanding, and yet there is a mixture of self-sufficiency, all-sufficiency, and at the same time a degree of insufficiency about him, which is intolerable." These traits he largely outgrew, but his love for moral teaching he never lost entirely. This characteristic, which in the speller made an appeal, perhaps unconsciously, to several generations, would only be tiresome to ours.

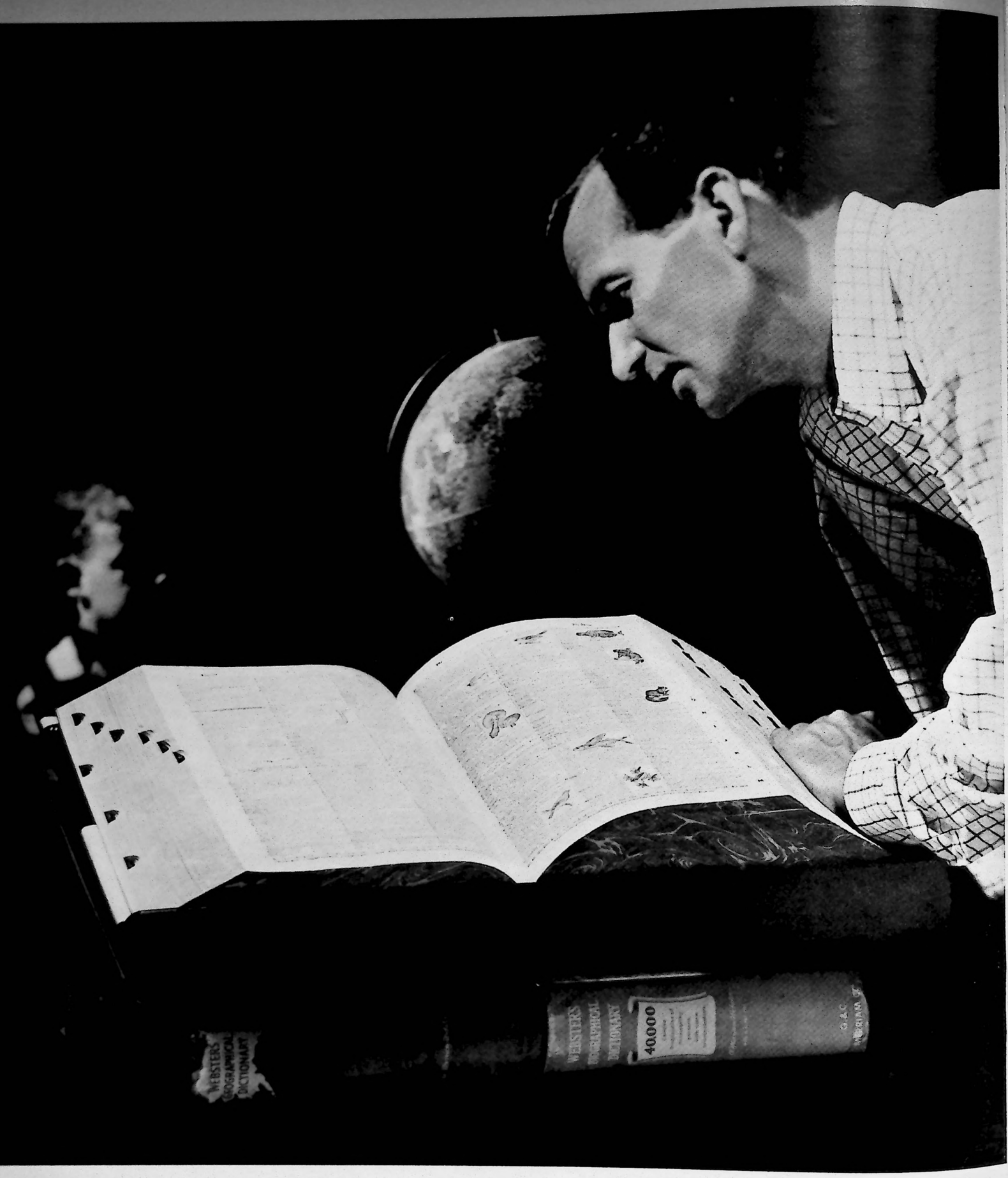
Sports in general disgusted him; beautiful scenery found but little response in his nature; he did not really appreciate music nor even literature, and yet, although he had not the literary genius of Johnson, he was able to produce a better dictionary than did his great English predecessor. This was because of his extraordinary ability to perform long and arduous mental labor, his fondness for petty details, and his noteworthy earnestness of purpose, based on a good education and guided by great independence of mind. "He taught the millions to read, but not one to sin" perhaps suggests rather vividly that tendency to moral didacticism that has been noted, but it is nevertheless a true characterization of the man who has deservedly won the sobriquet of the "Schoolmaster of the Republic."

Webster in his dictionary achieved an enduring success. The Merriam brothers, George and Charles, early of West Brookfield, Mass., and after 1831 owners of a printing office and bookstore in Springfield, were already successful enough in a modest way but were looking for bigger things. They had three qualities that made them successful businessmen in their time—farsightedness, a high sense of public responsibility, and an unusual skill in business management.

They appreciated the scholarly achievement, the educational importance, and the sales value of the Webster dictionary and soon after Webster's death in 1843 arranged with his heirs and with the temporary owners of the bound sheets of the 1841 edition, J. S. & C. Adams of Amherst, to acquire through purchase all rights to the publication of the book. The new owners fully comprehended the amount and quality of scholarship that would be required to preserve the value of their investment. They assembled a scholarly corps of editors, and their first Merriam-Webster product—*An American Dictionary of the English Language*—appeared in 1847, prepared under the supervision of Chauncey Goodrich, Webster's son-in-law and Yale professor.

Since then during the next hundred years four other complete revisions of the large dictionary and many editions of smaller dictionaries and reference books have been published by the firm. Adhering strictly throughout to the aim set by Noah Webster in accuracy of scholarship and completeness, the Merriam-Webster products have been of major importance in the field of lexicography and have been primarily responsible for perpetuating the Webster name as applied to dictionaries.

When people say "According to Webster," chances are they mean "according to Merriam-Webster." ♦


WEBSTER'S
GEOGRAPHICAL
DICTIONARY
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HOW TO READ A DICTIONARY

by Mortimer J. Adler

THE DICTIONARY INVITES A PLAYFUL READING. It challenges anyone to sit down with it in an idle moment only to find an hour gone by without being bored. Recently I noticed an advertisement for a dictionary as a wonder book. "Astonished Actually Means Thunderstruck" was the headline, written obviously in the hope that the prospective buyer would be thunderstruck, or wonderstruck, enough to look further. And the rest of the ad listed such tidbits as a "*disaster* literally means 'the stars are against you!' " or "to tantalize is to torment with the punishment of Tantalus as told in Greek mythology."

While I do not think astonishment is the dictionary's main mission in life, I cannot resist reporting some of the things I learned accidentally while thumbing its pages, in the course of writing this article. I discovered that the word "solecism" derives from Soli, the name of a Greek colony in Cilicia, whose inhabitants were thought by the Athenians to speak bad Greek; hence, "solecism" was probably the equivalent in Greek slang for a Bostonian's contemptuous reference to "New Yorkese." I learned that "coal" originally meant charred wood. It was then applied to mineral coal when this was first introduced, under such names as "sea-coal" and "pit-coal." Now that mineral coal is the more common variety, we redundantly refer to charred wood as "charcoal." I was edified by the fact that the drink "Tom and Jerry" derives its name from the two chief characters in Egan's "Life of London" (1821), that in England a low beer joint is called a "Tom and Jerry Shop," and that indulgence in riotous behavior is called "to tom and jerry." I had always thought that a forlorn hope was really a hope on the verge of turning into despair, but it seems that it isn't a hope at all. "Hope" here is a misspelling of the Dutch word "hoop" meaning heap. A forlorn hope is a storming party, a band of heroes who are willing to end up in a heap for their country's cause. And most shocking of all was the discovery that one theory about the origin of the magician's "hocus pocus" accounts for it as a corruption of "*hoc est corpus*" —the sacred words accompanying the sacrament of the Eucharist. This, together with the reversal in meaning of "dunce" —from the proper name of Duns Scotus, the subtlest doctor of the Church, to naming a numbskull—provides a two word commentary on the transition from the Middle Ages to modern times.

The staid modern dictionary is full of such wit even when it doesn't try to be funny, as Dr. Johnson did when he defined "oats" as "a grain which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people." Look up "Welsh rabbit," for example, or "scotch capon" or "swiss steak," and you will discover gentle jokes about national shortcomings in diet.

I find that what interests me most of all are the shifts in meaning of common words in daily use. From meaning an attendant on horses, "marshal" has come to mean a leader of men; though also originating in the stable, "constable" has gone in the reverse direction from signifying an officer of highest rank to denoting a policeman; "boon" has done an about-face by becoming the gift which answers a petition, having been the prayer which asked for it: "magistrate" and "minister" have changed places with each other in the ups and downs of words, for in current political usage, "magistrate" usually means a minor official, where "minister" refers to a *major* diplomatic or cabinet post. It is often hard to remember that a minister is a *servant* of the people, and harder still to recall the precise point of religious controversy which caused the substitution of "minister" for "priest" as the name for one who served in the performance of sacerdotal functions. And readers of our Constitution should have their attention called to a shift in the word "citizen" from meaning anyone who, by birth or choice, owes allegiance to the state, to the narrower designation of those who are granted the right to vote. Similarly, "commerce" has narrowed in meaning; like "trade," it once meant every dealing in merchandise, but now is distinguished from industry according to the difference between distributing commodities and producing them.

The word "commerce" reminds me of one other sort of incidental inquiry the dictionary lures you into. You discover that "commerce" and "mercenary" have the same root in "*mercis*," wares, and that leads you to the closely related root "*merces*," pay or reward, which is embodied in the word "mercy." If you start this game of research, you will find such roots as "*spec*" from "*spectare*" meaning to look at or see, which generates a family of 246 English words (species, speculate, specimen, specify, spectacle, inspect, respect, aspect,

etc.); or "*press*" from "*primo*" meaning to squeeze, which has an equally large family (impress, repress, pressing, compress, suppress, oppress, depress, express, etc.).

It is almost as hard to stop writing about the dictionary in this way as to stop reading one when you are in hot pursuit of the mysteries of human speech. But, over and above such fascinations, the dictionary has its sober uses. To make the most of these one has to know how to read the special sort of book a dictionary is. But, before I state the rules, let me see if I can explain why most people today don't use dictionaries in a manner befitting the purpose for which they were originally created.

In its various sizes and editions, the dictionary is an unlisted best-seller on every season's list. To be able to get along without one would be a sign of supreme literacy—of complete competence as a reader and writer. The dictionary exists, of course, because there is no one in that condition. But, if the dictionary is the necessity we all acknowledge, why is it so infrequently used by the man who owns one? And, even when we do consult it, why do most of us misuse the dictionary or use it poorly?

The answer to both questions may be that few of us make efforts at reading or writing anything above the present level of our literary competence. The books—or maybe it is just the newspapers and magazines—we read, and the things we write, don't send us to the dictionary for help. Our vocabularies are quite adequate, because the first rule in most contemporary writing is the taboo against strange words, or familiar words in strange senses.

Of course, there are always people (not excluding college graduates) who have difficulty with spelling or pronouncing even the common words in daily discourse. That, by the way, is the source of the most frequent impulse to go to the dictionary. There is nothing wrong about this. The dictionary is there to render this simple service—in fact, Noah Webster began his career as the compiler of a spelling book which sold in the millions. But my point remains—the dictionary has other and more important uses, and the reason we do not generally avail ourselves of these services is not our superiority, but rather our lack of need as the life of letters is currently lived.

The history of dictionaries, I think, will bear me out on this point. The Greeks did not have a dictionary, even though "lexicon" is the Greek word for it. They had no need for foreign language dictionaries because there was no literature in a foreign language they cared to read. They had no need for a Greek word-book because the small educated class already knew what such a book would contain. This small group of literate men would have been, like the modern French Academy, the makers of the dictionary, the arbiters of good usage. But at a time when so sharp a line separated the learned from the lewd (which, in an obsolete usage, means unlettered), there was no occasion for the few men who could make a dictionary to prepare one for the others.

George Santayana's remark about the Greeks—that they were the only uneducated people in European history—has a double significance. The masses were, of course, uneducated, but even the learned few were not educated in the sense that they had to sit at the feet of foreign masters. Education, in that sense, begins with the Romans, who went to school to Greek pedagogues, and became cultivated through contact with Greek culture. It is not surprising, therefore, that the first dictionaries were glossaries of Homeric words. The earliest lexicon which is still extant is such a glossary, prepared by a Greek, Apollonius, in the fifth century of our era, obviously intended to help Romans read the "Iliad" and "Odyssey" of Homer, as well as other Greek literature which employed the Homeric vocabulary. Most of us today need similar glossaries to read Shakespeare well.

There were dictionaries in the Middle Ages—a famous Latin one by the Spaniard, Isidore of Seville, which was really a philosophical work, a sort of encyclopedia of worldly knowledge accomplished by discussions of the most important technical terms occurring in learned discourse. There were foreign-language dictionaries in the Renaissance (both Latin and Greek) made necessary by the fact that the *humane letters* which dominated the education of the period were from the ancient languages. Even when the vulgar tongues—English, French, or Italian—gradually displaced Latin as the language of learning, the pursuit of learning was still the privilege of the few. Under such circumstances, dictionaries were intended for a limited audience, mainly as an aid to reading the most worthy literature. In attempting to compile a standard dictionary, Dr. Johnson derived his norms from the usage of the best writers, on the theory that this would furnish a guide to others who tried to read them, or who tried to write as well.

We see, then, that from the beginning the educational motive dominated the making of dictionaries, though, as in the case of Dr. Johnson, and the work of the French and Italian Academies, there was also an interest in preserving the purity and order of the language. As against the latter interest, the Oxford English Dictionary, begun in 1857, was a new departure, in that it did not try to dictate the best usage, but rather to present an accurate historical record of every type of usage—the worst as well as the best, taken from popular as well as stylish writing. But this conflict between the mission of the lexicographer as self-appointed arbiter and his function as historian can be regarded as a side-issue, for the dictionary, however constructed, is primarily an educational instrument. And the problem is whether that instrument is currently well used.

Our own Noah Webster is in a sense the hero of the story. Alarmed by the state into which learning had fallen after the Revolutionary War, Webster sought to make a one volume dictionary which would serve in the self-education of the semi-literate masses. He was concerned with the masses, not the elite, and with self-education, at a time when this country had not yet become democratic enough to regard the public education of all its children as a primary obligation of the state. The Webster dictionary was probably one of the first self-help books to become a popular best-seller. And the paradox is that now, with public education widely established in this country, with "literacy" as universal as suffrage, the self-help potentialities of a dictionary are seldom realized by the millions who own one. I am not thinking merely of children from progressive schools who cannot use a dictionary because they do not know the alphabet. I am thinking of all the products of contemporary education who, not being taught or inspired to read the great and difficult books, have little use for the dictionary. *How much better educated was the self-read man whom Webster helped!*

This brief history of dictionaries is relevant to the rules for reading and using them well. One of the first rules as to how to read a book is to know what sort of book it is. That means knowing what the author's intention was and what sort of thing you can expect to find in his work. If you look upon a dictionary merely as a spelling book or a guide to pronunciation, you will use it accordingly. If you realize that it contains a wealth of historical information, crystallized in the growth of language, you will pay attention, not merely to the variety of meanings which are listed under each word, but to their order.

And above all if you are interested in advancing your own education, you will use a dictionary according to its primary intention—as a help in reading books that might otherwise be too difficult because their vocabulary includes technical words, archaic words, literary allusions, or even familiar words used in now obsolete senses. The number of words in a man's vocabulary is as definite as the number of dollars he has in the bank; equally definite

is the number of senses in which a man is able to use any given word. But there is this difference; a man cannot draw upon the public treasury when his bank-balance is overdrawn, but we can all draw upon the dictionary to get the coin we need to carry on the transaction of reading anything we want to read.

Let me be sure that I am not misunderstood. I am not saying that a dictionary is all you need in order to move anywhere in the realms of literature. There are many problems to be solved, in reading a book well, other than those arising from the author's vocabulary. And even with respect to vocabulary, the dictionary's primary service is on those occasions when you are confronted with a technical word or with a word that is wholly new to you—such as "costard" (an apple), or "hoatzin" (a South American bird), or "rabato" (a kind of flaring collar). More frequently the problem of interpretation arises because a relatively familiar word seems to be used in a strange sense. Here the dictionary will help, but it will not solve the problem. The dictionary may suggest the variety of senses in which the troublesome word can be used, but it can never determine how the author you are reading used it. That you must decide by wrestling with the context. More often than not, especially with distinguished writers, the word may be given a special, an almost unique, shade of meaning. The growth of your own vocabulary, in the important dimension of multiple meanings as well as in the mere quantity of words, will depend, first of all, upon the character of the books you read, and secondly, upon the use you make of the dictionary as a guide. You will misuse it—you will stultify rather than enlighten yourself—if you substitute the dictionary for the exercise of your own interpretative judgment in reading.

This suggests several other rules as to how *not* to read a dictionary. There is no more irritating fellow than the man who tries to settle an argument about communism, or justice, or liberty, by quoting from Webster. Webster and all his fellow lexicographers may be respected as authorities on word-usage, but they are not the ultimate founts of wisdom. They are no Supreme Court to which we can appeal for a decision of those fundamental controversies which, despite the warnings of semanticists, get us involved with abstract words. It is well to remember that the dictionary's authority can, for obvious reasons, be surer in the field of concrete words, and even in the field of the abstract technical words of science, than it ever can be with respect to philosophical words. Yet these words are indispensable if we are going to talk, read, or write about the things that matter most.

Another negative rule is: Don't swallow the dictionary. Don't try to get word-rich quick, by memorizing a lot of fancy words whose meanings are unconnected with any actual experience. Merely verbal knowledge is almost worse than no knowledge at all. If learning consisted in nothing but knowing the meanings of words, we could abolish all our courses of study, and substitute the dictionary for every other sort of book. But no one except a pedant or a fool would regard it as profitable or wise to read the dictionary from cover to cover.

In short, don't forget that the dictionary is a book about words, not about things. It can tell you how men have used words, but it does not define the nature of the things the words name. A Scandinavian university undertook a "linguistic experiment" to prove that human arguments always reduce to verbal differences. Seven lawyers were given seven dictionary definitions of truth and asked to defend them. They soon forgot to stick to the "verbal meanings" they had been assigned, and became vehemently involved in defending or opposing certain fundamental views about the nature of truth. The experiment showed that discussions may start about the meanings of words, but that, when interest in the problem is aroused, they seldom end there. Men pass from words to things, from names to natures. The dictionary can start an argument, but only thought or research can end it.

If we remember that a dictionary is a book about words, we can derive from that fact all the rules for reading a dictionary intelligently. Words can be looked at in four ways.

(1) *Words are physical things*—writable marks and speakable sounds. There must, therefore, be uniform ways of spelling and pronouncing them, though the uniformity is often spoiled by variations.

(2) *Words are parts of speech.* Each single word plays a grammatical role in the more complicated structure of a phrase or a sentence. According to the part it plays, we classify it as a certain part of speech—noun or verb, adjective or adverb, article or preposition. The same word can vary in different usages, shifting from one part of speech to another, as when we say "Man the boat" or "Take the jump." Another sort of grammatical variation in words arises from their inflection, but in a relatively uninflected language like English, we need pay attention only to the conjugation of the verb (infinitive, participle, past tense, etc.), the number of the noun (singular and plural), and the degree of the adjective (especially the comparative and superlative).

(3) *Words are signs.* They have meanings, not one but many. These meanings are related in various ways. Sometimes they shade from one into another; sometimes one word will have two or more sets of totally unrelated meanings. Through their meanings words are related to one another—as synonyms sharing in the same meaning even though they differ in its shading; or as antonyms through opposition or contrast of meanings. Furthermore, it is in their capacity as signs that we distinguish words as proper or common names (according as they name just one thing or many which are alike in some respect); and as concrete or abstract names (according as they point to some thing which we can sense, or refer to some aspect of things which we can understand by thought but not observe through our senses).

Finally, (4) *Words are conventional.* They mean or signify natural things, but they themselves are not natural. They are man-made signs. That is why every word has a history, just as everything else man makes has a time and place of origin, and a cultural career, in which it goes through certain transformations. The history of words is given by their etymological derivation from original word-roots, prefixes, and suffixes; it includes the account of their physical change, both in spelling and pronunciation; it tells of their shifting meanings, and which among them are archaic and obsolete, which are current and regular, which are idiomatic, colloquial, or slang.

A good dictionary will answer all your questions about words under these four heads. The art of reading a dictionary (as any other book) consists in knowing what questions to ask about words and how to find the answers. I have suggested the questions. The dictionary itself tells you how to find the answers. In this respect, it is a perfect self-help book, because it tells you what to pay attention to and how to interpret the various abbreviations and symbols it uses in giving you the four varieties of information about words. Anyone who fails to consult the explanatory notes and the list of abbreviations at the beginning of a dictionary can blame only himself for not being able to read the dictionary well. Unfortunately, many people fail here, as in the case of other books, because they insist upon neglecting the prefatory matter—as if the author were just amusing himself by including it.

I think these suggestions about how to read, and how not to misuse, a dictionary are easy to follow. But like all other rules they will be followed well only by the man who is rightly motivated in the first place. And, in the last place, they will be wisely applied only by the man who remembers that we are both *free* and *bound* in all our dealing with language, whether as writers or readers. ◆

THE INTELLIGENT USE OF THE DICTIONARY

by John Matthews Manly and Edith Rickert

WORDS TAKE THE PLACE OF THE IMAGES that they indicate, and most of the time they do not evoke these images. When we read, and even when we think, we do not see behind each word the corresponding image. The word alone is in our minds, a dry, algebraic sign which suffices for us because it is understood and familiar, and because we know that we can at any moment replace it by the image. But as long as this evocation is not made, there can be no original thought, no creative work . . . .

The fitting of the images and ideas in our minds to the words that will most completely carry these images and ideas to other minds is the first step in sentence-building; and the sentence is the smallest unit in the expression of thought—the Latin *sententia* means a thought. Then before you can make any headway in speaking and writing you must acquire words and learn how to use them.

By far the best way to do this is to read much and widely, and with your mind alert to grasp not only every new word but every new shade of meaning given to a familiar word by its context. This method, however, is the process of a lifetime; it cannot be hurried; it is never at an end. The best single aid to the mastery of words is the intelligent use of the dictionary. This does not—cannot—take the place of the quest for words through reading; but it supplements this. It is a sort of mental First Aid, or Present Help; it keeps the wolf from the door when the vocabulary cupboard is empty. The reading of the dictionary is, moreover, the source of a distinct and peculiar pleasure—a pleasure which even educated people do not always appreciate.

The first rule for the use of the dictionary is: Choose a good one. To do this is most important, as the second rule for the dictionary is: Have it always at hand. The wise student may even go so far as to buy also a pocket dictionary for emergencies; but no pocket dictionary is sufficiently accurate or detailed to take the place of the larger work.

But what is the "intelligent use of the dictionary?" People who stop reading to look up every word that they do not fully understand are as rare as saints. It is only when readers come face to face with a word that conveys no meaning whatever that they will—some of them—if there is a dictionary within easy reach—turn to it for explanation. Suppose you read:

> Shakerly hurled the palimpsest upon which he had just wasted a small fortune in Dodson's face, ejaculating: "Fraud!" Dodson, his left eye bleeding from a cut where the sharp edge struck him, crumpled it up and threw it into the fire.

This passage would probably drive you to the dictionary, to find out what kind of missile could be a fraud, could cost a fortune, could cut an eye, and could be crumpled up and burned. If you look up the word palimpsest in your dictionary, you will find something like this:

> A parchment, tablet, etc., which has been used two or more times, the earlier writing being erased.

The derivation is given as from two Greek words which mean *to rub* and *again*. How much idea does this give you of the meaning of this word? Why should the parchment have been used two or three times? Why does the definition say *parchment* and not *paper*? Why was the writing erased? Who erased it and who wrote on the parchment again? Obviously, the word *palimpsest* is rich with associations and implications that cannot be explained in a small dictionary. In such a case as this, then you must either go to a large dictionary, or leave the passage only partly understood, and be yourself the poorer for not knowing an important and curious fact in literary history. An extraordinary word of this type is sometimes worth a special visit to the library in order to consult *Webster's New International Dictionary*, which, you may be sure, will give you vital and sufficient information.

A third rule for using the dictionary is: Learn its system. Read with care its preface and table of contents. You will see that it will supplement your imperfect knowledge of spelling, pronunciation, and capitals; that it will resolve problems in grammar; that it will give the etymology of words, definitions of them, and to some extent illustrations of their proper use; that it will supply lists of synonyms or words nearly equivalent in meaning, and explain briefly the chief

difference between words that convey almost the same ideas; that it will show you how derivatives are formed from root words; that it will teach you which words are slang, obsolete, archaic, or colloquial, in order that you may be warned against using them without consideration of their effect; and that where explanations in words may not give a sufficient idea of the thing defined, it will often add a picture of the thing itself. Moreover, you will find that its information is not limited to typical and universal things and ideas, but that it includes also lists of proper names which stand for individual persons and places, and gives the fundamental facts about them. And usually you will see in it a glossary of common phrases borrowed from foreign languages, and a list of abbreviations in common use among printers and writers.

Before you begin to work with any dictionary, you should make yourself familiar with its methods of presenting information. You should, for instance, look for the table of abbreviations of which it makes use, or you will not be able to understand in some cases information given in abbreviated form. Can you, for example, say offhand what is meant by the following: W., Skr., perh., p.a., Com., com., Ex., exc., g., G., incho., l.c., NGr.? Again, you must understand the diacritic marks, or you will not be able to pronounce according to instructions. You should also understand why the forms and the meanings stand in a given order.

Meanings are in some dictionaries arranged in their historical order, so that we can trace the development of the word from its origin down to its most recent uses; in others the meanings are arranged in the order of their importance, the commonest being placed first. These points should not be forgotten in looking up the meaning of a word. And, as was said before, it is most important to look for such characterizations of a word as *slang, archaic, obs.* or *obsoles., colloq., dial.*, etc., if you would learn to know words not as mere combinations of letters, but as beings rich with associations of all kinds, and alive with infinite possibilities.

A fourth rule for the use of the dictionary is: Take your time. If in looking up a new word you are content with a hasty glance at the first meaning, the chances are great that you will soon have to look up the same word again, partly because you did not learn the range of its meanings, and partly because you did not dwell long enough upon even the one meaning for the impression to remain. Moreover, the awakening of surprise or interest as you investigate the origin and associations of a word, and note curious details about its history or use, will be a great aid in so fixing a word in your memory that it will offer itself when you have use for it. When you can afford to do so, you should take the time to look up a word in all its bearings: spelling, pronunciation, origin, history, changes in meaning and range of meanings, associations and character, and synonyms, perhaps even some grammatical peculiarity connected with it. In this kind of work you will do well to form the habit of using both the unabridged and abridged dictionaries. For simple, common words, to which the unabridged dictionaries give much space because of historical or dialectical usage, you will find the smaller dictionary ample; and the complexity of the larger work may only confuse you. But for unusually interesting words, even when the smaller dictionary gives adequate definitions of them, you will find in the larger dictionary a wealth of curious fact and illustration that will tend to make such words your own forever.

A leisurely attitude in dictionary work has the further advantage that it gives the eye a chance to glean by the way. As you skim the page headings, looking for the alphabetical combination that will guide you to your word, if your attention is attracted by a strange word, do you take a moment to gratify your curiosity about it? The habit of doing so is an invaluable asset to anyone who would write. It serves to store up innumerable words which gradually pass from the conscious to the subconscious mind, where they may live for years and then suddenly pop back into consciousness when the mind is calling for what they can supply. The explanation of this fact lies in the theory that the mind does not really forget even when it seems to forget—that an impression once registered may lie in darkness for years and be called into light by some chance association of ideas. For this reason it is worth while to take the time whenever you can to register impressions of the words which arouse a momentary curiosity as you pass them by. ♦

Adventures in the Dictionary

by Odell Shepard

THIS LITTLE VOLUME that lies before me on the desk, seven inches by four in size and containing exactly one thousand pages, is in some ways the most remarkable book I possess. Anywhere from five to ten thousand years have gone to its making. For another thing, most of the raw materials that compose the other books in my library are to be found in its pages. Finally, this book is packed with information and entertainment mingled and intertwined; it is accurate and marvelous, at the same time serious and farcical, wise and witty, up-to-date and prehistoric. I do not see how more than this could be truly said for the versatility of any book.

Although the usefulness of lexicography needs no argument whatever, the dictionary salesmen who visit me dilate upon nothing else. Never yet has one of these gentlemen, several of whom have been mildly intelligent, said to me in fact or effect: "I assure you, sir, that you will find this work exciting, full of strange and unimaginable matters, compact of beauty, replete with lore. No novel of our time is more thrilling, no drama since Shakespeare contains more revelation of human nature, and, as for poetry, there has been nothing more beautiful since Homer. In short, I know that you will enjoy this book."

No, the dictionary salesmen whom I have met—or rather, those who have met me—never talk in this way. They turn loose a glib, memorized patter about their new devices for indicating pronunciation, or some such thing, with a total disregard of all that really counts in a dictionary which would have moved Dr. Johnson to throw them violently out of the house. All that they can see in words is a base utility, in the final analysis a means of making money. Well, I can see that, too, but it is not quite all that I can see. If I were in the position of these salesmen I should assume that my prospective customers knew already how a dictionary may be used for everyday purposes—such, for example, as finding out for the hundredth time how to spell "leisure" and discovering what species of reptile a mongoose is. People who do not know that a dictionary is good for such things will never buy one, anyway, and so I should devote myself to showing it is actually readable.

Of course, we must always try to remember that to the dull all things are dull; and even you and I, when we put the dictionary to dull uses, may expect to get corresponding results. Really dull people never have any adventures anywhere, and least of all in dictionaries. For my present purposes we have to assume a person who thoroughly knows how to read—one who attacks any book he has in hand, even the telephone directory, with all he has and is, with the total range of his knowledge and experience and memory and imagination. Such a reader can set forth on endless travels from any one of the thousand pages in my little green dictionary.

I am aware that what we call "mere words" are just now in disrepute, and that our strong, silent men of action, ably seconded by their academic henchmen, the behaviorists, have done their best, both by precept and example, to bring them into contempt. Much the same suspicion and dislike attaches to "mere rhetoric" and "mere literature," which also carry with them a taint of the hated intellect. Ever since Thomas Carlyle "preached his gospel of silence in forty volumes," a general inability to cope with words has been regarded, by the stutterers themselves at least, as a mark of strong character and unusual efficiency, as though language were a sort of sluice drawing off the energies that might otherwise be poured into "action." (Even if it is that, far worse things might be said of it.) And in our own day of *élan vital*—what a perfect shibboleth for a period of deficient vitality!—we hear the implied admiration of dumbness on every hand in such phrases as "gift of

the gab" and "fatal fluency." The realization, once common among educated people, that mastery of words is the surest means we know to mastery of thought, of men, and ultimately of oneself, seems to be lost or forgotten in our time.

This impatience with mere words is not confined to captains of industry and their innumerable public echo. It must often occur to one who writes and reads a great deal, and especially to one who makes writing and reading in some way his profession, that he is dealing with his world only at second hand, from a distance, and that he is missing somehow, in the endless pages of black on white through which he travels, the colors of the outer world which he calls reality. These words, which are his only medium, whether of thought or of expression—what are they but modulated breath? Tenuous, fluttering, ephemeral things, no sooner uttered than they fall silent, they seem too weak to cross the gulf between mind and mind; and when they are written down they look farther still from anything warm and human. How sure and firm and dependable, in such a mood, seem the materials of the painter's art, the sculptor's, the architect's! And although the musician also works in airy tones that fall at once into silence, even he, with his wide gamut and range of timbres, seems better equipped than one who must work with only a few vowels and consonants. Considering all this, we need not be surprised to hear the man of letters sigh now and then for a more substantial medium than "words, the shadows of a shadow world."

And yet you will not hear any conscientious workman in words sigh over them for very long. No sooner has he made his complaint than he is charmed anew by their magic and their power. By dint of long struggle he has learned what every word in his vocabulary can be made to do, what weight of meaning it will bear, what it can suggest beyond its meaning, what rhythms it will fit, with what moods it corresponds. He loves his words as a violinist does his bow and strings. Each of them has come to glow for him with a color and warmth of its own; he feels its peculiar weight and texture. Words have been his torment, his discipline, and his enduring delight. Better than any other man he knows the reluctance with which they yield up their inner secrets, but he alone knows the worth of those secrets when they are won. To show how he feels about them in his rare hours of triumph, I quote a few sentences from a man who toiled over words as manfully as any one of our time and who was obliged to find his reward chiefly in the joy of toiling. "Nothing is more mysterious than the power of using words," wrote Edward Thomas. "It is the supreme proof, above beauty or strength or intelligence, that a man or woman lives. Lighter than gossamer, words can entangle and hold fast all that is loveliest and strongest and fleetest and most enduring in heaven and earth. They are for the moment, perhaps, excelled by the might of policy and beauty, but only for the moment, and then all has passed away; but the words remain. And though they may also pass away under the sinking of the stars, they mark our utmost achievement in time."

Rapidly ruffling the pages of my little book, I catch glimpses of a hundred words that have been living on men's lips in one form and another for a hundred centuries. We seldom remember that these frail sounds, familiar to us from childhood, are the oldest living things that men have made, that they are likely to prove literally more enduring than bronze, and that the Sphinx is a child beside them. Their very age suggests our need of them, reminds us that we have climbed chiefly by their help above the ape and the saber-tooth, and prepares us to find them suffused with humanity. In every ancient word there must be some mark of our human nature, for it is the child of our breath and is made in our image. The indelible human stamp is so clear on almost every old word in the language that one who knows how to read "mere words" might almost afford to lay all other human records aside.

When the poorest man in the world sets out to compute the vast wealth that has been handed down to him out of the past as his indefeasible inheritance—an exercise to be recommended even to persons of moderate poverty—I think he should begin with words, with mere words. For what thoughts could we have without words to shape and hold them, or what emotions, even, with nothing to give them voice? And someone, let us never forget, had to make these instruments of precision, these rods of Aaron. Simple-minded people, and even some modern scholars in their despair of solving the mystery of language, have held that words were originally a direct gift from the gods, and of this view we may retain enough to assert that they are, at any rate, a direct gift to us from a godlike faculty in man. For a word, almost any word you may choose, is by no means an immediate and spontaneous growth. It has been toiled for long and hard; it has been earned in the labor of thought, it has been groped for long and long before it was found, it has been lost and saved again many times. We may reasonably think of a word as a tiny but always spreading spot of order reclaimed from chaos and old night. It is a trophy set up on the battle-ground where once, long ago, the armies of darkness were turned back and the legions of light went onward one march farther along their endless way. If that victory had not been won, or if that trophy had not been set up to commemorate it, your thought and mine would have been so much the less precise or wide or fair; there would have been one more gap between the things we can vaguely surmise and those we clearly think, one more gulf between what we feel and what we can say to one another.

Some may find fault with the dictionary because its words are not arranged in any significant order, but this does not disturb me. You can test an instrument almost as well by touching a key here and there with varying force and pressure as you can by performing on it a whole sonata, and it is in some such way that the dictionary enables one to test our English language. Wonderful tones we come across in ranging up and down that scale—"silver," "reservoir," "vervain," and a thousand others that you could not invent for yourself by any taking of thought. These are addressed to the ear alone, but if you are looking for something more intellectual you will find it on an early page in the word "absolute." How many centuries were required for working out that conception and then pinning it down, and how many for the sister word "infinite"?

So much, then, for the pleasure and constant surprise to be found in dictionary adventuring. I do not mean to imply that this striking a note here and there with one finger is a sign of virtuosity. The skill is in taking the notes by handfuls, making them chime, making them laugh and weep, making them mourn and dance and sing. In that there is difficulty enough, so that anyone who has gained in it even a little skill, or who has learned to delight in the skill of others, can afford to be almost patient with the strong, silent men who sneer at "mere literature" and "felicity of phrase." Their ignorance is pathetic. Speaking quite soberly, we know of nothing more wonderful than this, that out of a mere mouthful of air a man may shape harmonies that will set the hearts of listeners thousands of miles or thousands of years away suddenly astir. But to play those harmonies, to touch those far-off hearts and minds, one must know to a nicety many thousands of different notes. ◆

HOW THE DICTIONARY IS

In this section of the main editorial department of the G. & C. Merriam Company—the only publisher that specializes entirely in dictionary making—specially trained editors and editorial assistants from every part of the country, and from many different universities, are constantly developing and improving upon the Merriam-Webster dictionary.

CREATED

The Merriam-Webster Story

FROM WHAT SOURCE does a dictionary derive its authority? Is one dictionary any more authoritative than another? How many people have evaluated a dictionary by the answers to these questions? They are fundamental questions, for if a reference work does not have authority and dependability, it has nothing. Intelligent people do not spend time looking up information that is known to be unreliable; nor do they depend upon a less reliable source if a more reliable one is just as accessible.

Through more than a hundred years of trustworthy performance, Merriam-Webster dictionaries have come to be recognized as authoritative. But their publishers do not ask today for recognition on past performance only. Through this article, G. & C. Merriam Company will do what no other dictionary publisher has done in relation to his own product—answer questions about authoritativeness and prove the superiority of Merriam-Webster dictionaries by opening the doors to its editorial offices.

Competent observers of the language agree that the proper function of the dictionary maker is to record the language as it is used by the majority of its users, not to create it or legislate concerning it. Authority for a language dictionary comes, then, from the users of the language. This idea is not a new one; G. & C. Merriam Company has been subscribing to it for a hundred years. And they do not hesitate to take the next logical step in acknowledging that if the authority for a language dictionary comes from the users of the language, then that authority depends upon the records of language use that support it. A dictionary maker can neither record nor reflect usage unless he has extensive records to show what that usage is. Thus, the first step in the Merriam editorial process is the accumulation of evidence.

On almost any day a group of editors may sit around the table in one of the conference rooms and discuss such matters of policy as the method by which this evidence is to be gathered. Years of experience have proved to G. & C. Merriam Company that no one man is capable of deciding alone the multifarious and complex policy matters pertaining to a general-language dictionary. The group of editors is made up of specialists in linguistics, pronunciation, etymology, dialect, science, religion, music, and sports.

To see how the principles adopted by this group of policy makers are applied by the editorial staff, we move into the main editorial department, a spacious, bright room that occupies almost the entire second floor of the Merriam building. A glance at this room quickly dispels any antiquated notion that a dictionary is made by a handful of aging scholars in dingy close quarters. Here working side by side day after day are scholars from every section of the country and from many different universities. Most of them are former members of college faculties. These editors and editorial assistants collect records of the language principally through a never-ending and wide-sweeping reading program. They search mainly for examples of use in the basic, general, non-technical vocabulary. Staff members are trained in such special subjects as philosophy, medicine, art, music, sociology, political science, anthropology, economics, physics, chemistry, botany, zoology, mathematics, and engineering. Each of the specialists in his reading keeps careful track of the recurring, increasing, and changing terminology in his special field. Each working day these general readers and specialists mark thousands of words for recording in the Merriam files.

What kinds of material do these people read, what words do they take note of and how frequently, and what are the mechanics of getting these words into a practical file?

As for the kinds of material read, books (both fiction and nonfiction), learned journals and trade journals, magazines, reviews and reports, mail-order catalogues and house organs, menus—all move across Merriam editorial desks daily; everything that is

printed in English furnishes evidence for editorial analysis. The editorial department has its own library and librarian, but it uses widely the resources of the Library of Congress, special libraries of large universities, libraries maintained by industries, and the large and well-equipped Springfield City Library. Printed matter owned by G. & C. Merriam Company is marked directly on the page; words recorded from borrowed books are listed on separate sheets.

From the hands of each reader the marked material is sent to trained assistants for processing. Some of this processing is done by a photostat machine especially built for G. & C. Merriam Company. The special assistants and the photostat operators transfer marked matter to "citation" slips.

From these illustrated slips it may be seen that Merriam editors do not mark words merely to show that they occur in present-day English, any more than they mark them simply to show the number of times they occur. The experienced lexicographer does not count words; instead, he gathers the kind of evidence that will show him exactly how the word was used in context, by whom, and when; he knows it is only through careful analysis of this type of evidence that he can judiciously determine which words ought to be entered in the dictionary, and far more important, how those words that are entered should be defined.

After citation slips have been prepared, the next step is to make them available for use. A staff of file clerks spend all their time sorting and distributing the huge number of citation slips that flow from the typing room every day. Here is the most valuable collection in the world today of evidence for the analysis of the over-all current language. No other collection of similar material even approaches this one in extent or usefulness.

Before writing a definition, a highly experienced editor receives from this file the accumulated citations for the word he is defining. With these to tell him the scope of meaning, the currency, and the level of use of the word and his knowledge and experience to weigh and balance all the evidence, he writes a definition.

Preparation of the definition is not the last step in the process; others—too numerous to describe in detail here—remain to be taken. Etymology and pronunciation must be determined and inserted, variant spellings considered, usage notes and part-of-speech labels added, cross references made, and so on. Then all definitions must be passed from the defining editor through the hands of a reviewing editor and a supervising editor. Only after the definition has been doubly approved is it sent to Merriam proofreaders and, finally, to the printer.

A bare claim that such a process as that just described establishes authority is not convincing without proof that the effects of it are evident in Merriam-Webster dictionaries. For this proof, we return to the question of what kinds of words are marked in the Merriam system of recording and how many times. This question is revealingly answered by "all kinds" and "an unlimited number of times." Our vocabulary is constantly changing in meaning and acquiring new senses, so that no word in the language can be ignored in a trustworthy dictionary-making program.

New words enter the language daily from every one of the thousands of subjects with which man is concerned. Most of us are aware of such recent general terms as *book-burning, heliport, smaze;* fewer of us are aware of such technical newcomers as *butazolidin, cermet, surfactant.* Both kinds must be marked for possible entry in a general-language dictionary. Because of the thoroughness of the Merriam recording process, Merriam-Webster dictionaries are second to none in the matter of including new words. But inclusion of new words is not in itself very effective in establishing authoritativeness. They can be gathered in great variety from just the front pages of any daily newspaper, and any dictionary that is published today may have some that yesterday's dictionary does not have.

More important than the addition of new words are the gradual shifts that take place in the established words in the language, the words that form its very backbone. These established words are of continuing interest and importance; they are also the words that are most difficult to keep track of and therefore the ones that best show the effects of a skillful and conscientious editorial process. The following are a few examples of common terms that have been extended to include new senses: *accelerator, aspect, austerity, bird* (*v.*), *black* (*adj.*), *capsule, fission, ghetto, locker, merchandise* (*v.*), *nostalgia, package* (*n.*), *parity, scan, total* (*adj.*), *turntable.* Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary is the only dictionary that shows all of these new senses.

In addition to the established terms that acquire new senses, there are a multitude of others that are easily and quickly carried over from one subject to another. Although the new terms *telecast, televiewer, telegenic, video,* for example, came in with the development of television, it is just as significant that much of the well-established vocabulary of radio has been carried over into the field of television. Such terms as *broadcast, receive, transmitter* are now labeled *Radio and Television* in Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary because actual uses in our files show that such labeling is accurate.

In the same way that television picked up some of the vocabulary of radio, the development of air transportation carried along with it some of the vocabulary of such earlier transportation as railroading. The very common word *terminal* is an example and an interesting one, because even before its adoption in air transportation it had spread to bus transportation and trucking.

The recording of new words and of clear alterations of meaning implies, of course, a constant check of *all* vocabulary. Our rich inheritance of apparently unchanging words cannot be neglected if a dictionary editor's report is to be complete.

Meanings are not the only phase of language for which G. & C. Merriam Company files are kept up to date. Spelling, compounding, and even inflection change too. Our files show, for example, that within the last decade or so the spelling *sulfur* has come to be preferred to *sulphur;* the plural *buses* has surpassed the older *busses; man power, pay roll,* and *air line* have followed a general trend in language by becoming single words in their most common senses; *portland cement* and *diesel* have dropped their capitalization.

Because of clear evidence in the Merriam files these matters that are the essential ones of a good dictionary are more accurately presented in Merriam-Webster dictionaries than in any others. Careful study of the treatment of terms in Webster's New Collegiate should leave little doubt of the superiority that results from the kind of recording done at G. & C. Merriam Company.

Without such recording and accumulated records of usage as have been described here, a dictionary maker must grope blindly in the dark and choose one of two positions: that of guessing and expressing personal opinions; or that of accepting the word of another dictionary. And without a body of trained editors who can interpret them objectively and clearly in the dictionary, the records, even if available, would be a collection of mere scraps of paper. These two, its records and its staff, determine the authority and hence the accuracy of a dictionary, and one dictionary is more authoritative and more accurate than another only insofar as it excels in respect to them.

Merriam-Webster dictionaries are recognized as the most authoritative and best English-language dictionaries in the world today, not through any kind of magic or by virtue of any preemptive right, but because G. & C. Merriam Company is willing to invest the time, the money, and the effort to gather the most extensive and valuable records in existence of the over-all current English language and to establish the largest and best-qualified staff of editors to transform those records into the dictionary. ♦

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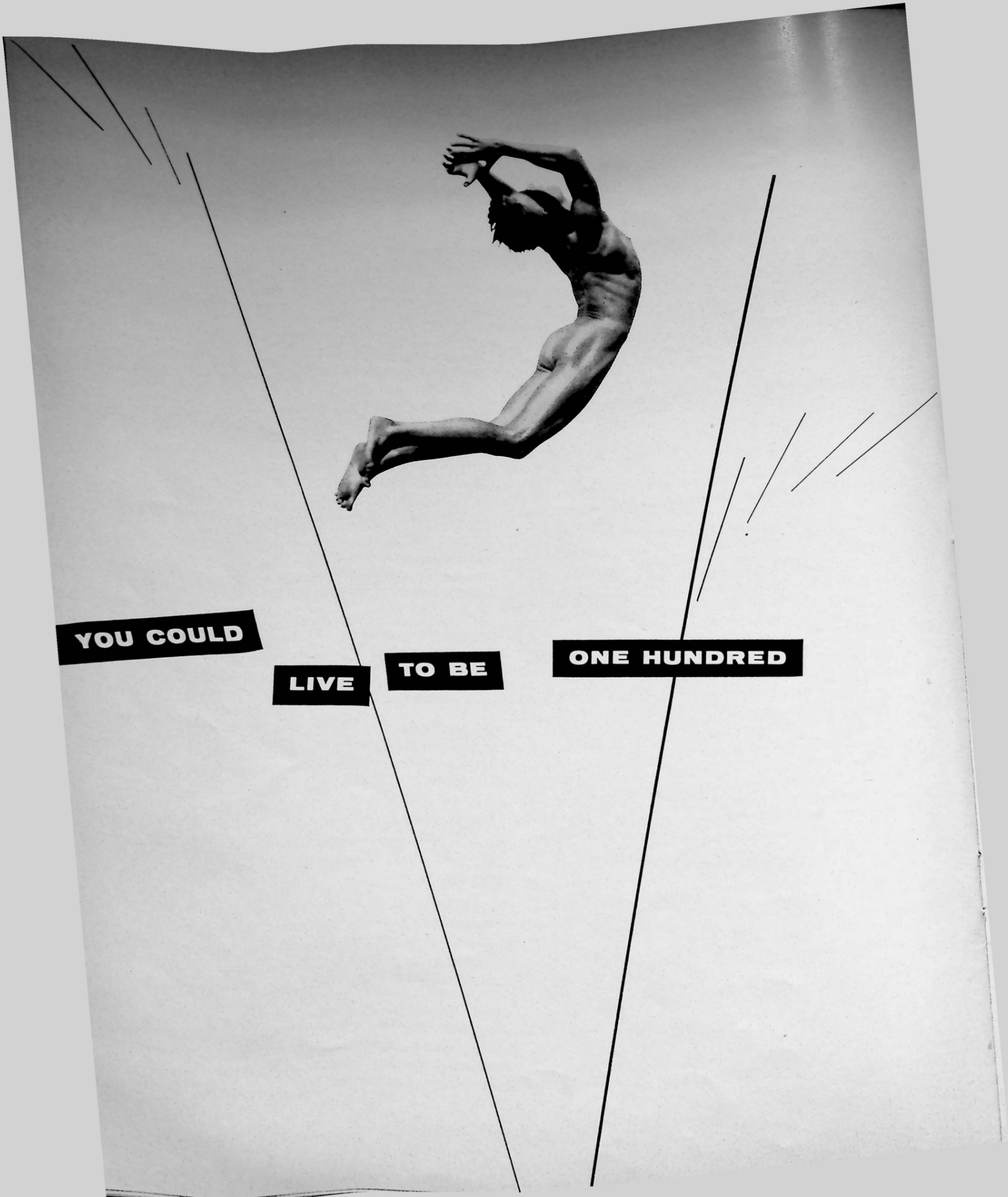

YOU COULD
LIVE
TO BE
ONE HUNDRED

by R. Will Burnett

MANY YEARS AGO the great French surgeon, Alexis Carrel, put a small piece of the heart of an unborn chicken into a germ-free chamber. He circulated through this chamber a kind of soup which had in it all of the foodstuffs needed for life. This was in 1912. When Carrel died, in 1944, his chicken heart was still living. It was 32 years old at that time and was going strong. Carrel believed that the piece of heart tissue could be kept alive forever, and there is no reason to think that he was wrong.

Suppose that it would be possible to seal up a newborn human baby in a germ-free container and to keep it living there for several hundred years. Would you choose that kind of life even for one year, let alone for several hundred years? Definitely not! Life is for *living*, not for just being kept alive!

Yet there are people who are so afraid of getting hurt or of dying that they cut half the fun out of living. They might just as well be sealed up in a big glass bottle. There are people who are so worried about diseases that they are almost afraid to breathe for fear that they will inhale someone's germs. And there are others who yearn for "the good old days" of the horse and buggy and can't relax to enjoy a Sunday ride in the family car.

Such people are called *hypochondriacs*. They spend a good deal of their time and energy worrying about imaginary illnesses and dangers. This article *isn't for hypochondriacs*. It presents some important facts and figures for the person who isn't afraid to face the facts and to be reasonable about them. It is one thing to accept the fact that cancer is the second biggest killer of people in the United States today and to learn its warning signals so that you can get early treatment if it should ever strike. But it is another thing to become so worried about cancer you can't live a normal life. The facts in this article are important to you. But they aren't for the chap who is so afraid of being hurt or of dying that he is missing life and living.

There is a real difference between *chronological age* (age in years) and *physiological age*. By physiological age we mean the condition of the body and how well it is working. It is easy to understand the difference between age in years and age in working condition if we think of an automobile. You can buy a car this year and have it worn out and in the junk heap by next year if you try. Or, take the same car and handle it with kid gloves, and that car may be in new condition for years. There are 20-year-old antiques on the road today that are in better working condition than cars that rolled off the assembly line last year. And there are oldsters among human beings who are in better working condition at 70 and 80 than youngsters who are half their age.

Now it would be nice if this comparison of the machine to the body held all the way down the line. Unfortunately, it won't work out this way. With proper care, a car could be kept in a garage for 90 years and be just about as good as new. But while giving your body good care can do wonders in increasing its useful life, it will still keep aging no matter what you do. For one thing, no matter what you do, the heart, the lungs, the stomach—all the organs and every single cell (the tiny, living units which make up all of your body) keep working every minute, hour, and day of your life.

Of course, your body has one advantage over a machine. If you operate a machine sufficiently long, it will wear out. This is true, as well, of the human machine. But, up to a point, the human machine repairs itself.

You have seen this happen many times. You cut your finger, and many cells are destroyed. But immediately the remaining living cells begin the process of repair by dividing and becoming two cells where there was only one before. Before long the cut is healed, and new cells have taken the place of the old.

Actually, this process of building new cells goes on continuously throughout your body. Every day some 350 to 400 billion red blood

An example of vigorous longevity is provided by Grandma Moses, the famous painter. She was 78 years old before her work was "discovered." At the age of 92 her autobiography was published. She is now in her 98th year and her creative talent continues to bring her many honors.

cells die and are replaced by as many new ones. About two months from now or a little later, you will not have a single living red blood cell in your body that is there now. All of them will have worn out —died of old age, if you like—and will have been replaced by new cells. The same process goes on throughout your body and continues all your life. In fact, it is estimated that, except for your nerve cells, there is probably not a single, living cell in your body today that was there seven years ago. In a way, you trade in your complete body for a new one every seven years or so.

If you have a new body every seven years, except for the nerve cells, why can't you keep going forever? The Russian biologist, Elie Metchnikoff, noted that a condition called sclerosis (skler-o′-sis), or hardening, goes along with aging. In sclerosis, certain tissues (such as the membrane which lines your blood vessels) are partially replaced by another tissue. This tissue which is responsible for hardening is called *connective tissue*. It is something like the tough, fibrous material that fastens your bones to one another (ligaments) and your muscles to the bones (tendons). Connective tissue cells are found throughout your body. Metchnikoff observed that as people aged, liver cells, brain cells, and cells in other parts of the body seemed to be increasingly replaced with connective tissue cells. These connective tissue cells which have replaced the normal ones interfere with the normal working of the body.

In old people, Metchnikoft also found that the white blood cells, or phagocytes (fag′o-sites), that go around in our bodies devouring germs, gathered in large numbers in the kidneys. He thought these white blood cells seemed to destroy the kidney tissue, which was then replaced with connective tissue.

It was Metchnikoff's theory that all this was not normal. But other scientists have looked at the question differently. They believe that the movement of white blood cells to the kidneys and the development of connective tissue are the *result*, rather than the *cause*, of the death of aging cells. According to this viewpoint, the body has a certain, normal life span. Even when disease and injury do not lessen this span, the time will come when even healthy cells will quit replacing themselves with other cells like them. Why? *We still don't know*. But as the body grows old, certain changes can be seen in the cells.

The living stuff inside the cells seems to lose its ability to get rid of waste and to build new living material. Tiny particles normally found inside the cells get larger and tiny granules of colored material appear. These enlarged particles seem to interfere with the cell's ability to take on food. The cells lose water and cannot reproduce themselves. According to the one viewpoint, it is the increasing number of dying and dead cells that cause the production of large numbers of phagocytes which Metchnikoff saw. These white cells simply do the important job of getting rid of the dead cells. Then connective tissues move in to replace the original cells.

No one knows what causes aging. But there are certain changes that go on in the aging human body that can be described even if we are not sure what causes them. The changes in the cells which we have just discussed are among them.

As body cells degenerate or waste away, they will be replaced in part with connective tissue. This causes sclerosis or hardening.

The parts of the body most commonly affected by sclerosis are the arteries. These arteries are the tubes which carry fresh blood from your heart to other parts of your body. The artery walls normally contain an *elastic* connective tissue. When the heart pumps blood through the arteries they expand. But when sclerosis or hardening develops, so much new connective tissue grows in the artery wall that these walls become hard and rigid. You have heard of the disease called "hardening of the arteries." Its scientific name is *arteriosclerosis* (ar-teer′-e-o-skler-o′-sis). When the heart pushes blood through arteries affected by arteriosclerosis, an unusual strain is placed on both the heart and the arteries themselves. The blood pressure goes up as the heart tries to force blood along. The heart has to work harder to force blood through the hardened arteries. The pressure of the blood may break the walls of the hardened arteries. If this occurs in the brain or other vital organs, the results can be serious.

Arteries aren't the only place where connective tissues show a man is aging. It would be close to accurate to say that a person is as old as his connective tissue. For the connective tissue may change or develop in the brain, kidney, liver, arteries, or almost anywhere else in the body.

A study of 3,691 men who were between the ages of 50 and 95 showed that the blood pressure (we refer now to the pressure produced when the heart forces blood through the body) increased with age. This increase in blood pressure was often due to the heart's having to work hard to push blood through hardened arteries. The study seemed to show that so-called "normal" blood pressure becomes quite rare with advanced age. It seems that high blood pressure caused by arteriosclerosis becomes so common that we should think of it as normal after age 70 and above. You should understand, however, that some people in this age bracket do not have high blood pressure at all.

There are other changes that commonly accompany aging. The heart increases in weight and continues to grow after body growth has stopped. As a person ages, the heart lies more on its side so that it is in a less central position in your chest than it is when you are young. As a person grows older, fat is found around the heart muscles. The openings in the heart lose their softness as the fiberlike connective tissue develops. The beat of the heart tends to become irregular.

Quite often, older people discover that their eyes are changing. These changes generally begin to take place between the ages of 40 and 50, and they go on as aging continues. Perhaps the most common change is that it becomes harder to see objects that are close to the eye. You may have watched older people holding a newspaper or magazine at arm's length in order to see the print. The lens of the healthy, young eye becomes thicker when one looks at something close at hand, thinner when one looks at something farther away. As most people get along in years, the lens becomes less adjustable. When this happens, it is difficult or impossible for

the lens to become thick and rounded enough to see things close at hand. Other changes may also occur, but the lessened adjustability of the lens is by far the most common evidence of aging in the eye.

What else can we say about the process of physiological aging? One of the most interesting and annoying changes is a rather steady but gradual loss of muscle strength. Many studies have been made of how strength changes with age, and they all show about the same thing. Muscular strength seems to increase until the late twenties. It goes down from that age on. This loss of strength is gradual enough that you probably won't even be aware of it until you are 40 or 50.

Everyone knows only young men are used to fly fighter planes. The reason is partly that older men are not as strong, quick, or sure in their movements. They take longer even to start moving. Studies have shown that the top years for athletes are between 20 and 25.

Maybe you *will* have slowed down a bit by the time you are 30. That is no reason to sit around and sulk. You aren't through yet. One place where older people have it all over youngsters is in work that requires experience, judgment, and the kind of skill that comes from long years of study and practice. Painting, writing, and teaching are examples.

For such workers as scientists and musicians, the most productive years seem to be the 30's and 40's, but many of them do fine work and make major contributions to their fields in their 70's or 80's.

In medicine, surgery, and similar health fields, the years of best work average in the late 30's, but major contributions are made by people who ranged in age from 18 to 92.

Similar figures hold true for most of the other fields investigated with the exception that leadership posts, such as those of President of the United States, military and naval commanders, judges, cabinet officers, religious leaders, and so forth, were filled with men whose ages ranged, as a rule, from the late 40's to the late 60's. And a survey of business leaders listed in *Who's Who in America* shows the best period for business leadership to be between 55 and 59 years of age.

From 18 to 92. That's a long span. How do we account for this great range in the ages at which people do their greatest or best work? First, of course, people age at *different rates of speed.* A top-flight scientist or artist isn't likely to continue this way at 50, if by that time his kidneys don't function well, his heart pounds like a trip hammer, and his head buzzes all of the time. On the other hand, a man who aged slowly may still be going strong at 70.

But there seems to be something else involved. In a very real sense a person is as old as he *thinks* he is. Studies have shown that old people quite often spend a great deal of their time looking back, thinking of the days of their youth, and worrying about both actual and imaginary illnesses. Such people are *really* old. They fear the future, feel lost in their daily lives, and look backwards. Such persons are unlikely to make contributions in the fields for which they were trained.

The biggest trouble with some old people is that they *think* they are old. A man isn't licked while he thinks he has a chance. The person who has developed the habit of looking at life through glasses that are reasonably rose-tinted and who accepts himself, both his weaknesses and strengths, without worry, will probably lead a more happy and active life than a person with less optimistic attitudes. And he will probably even live longer.

Men and women have always aged and died. But getting old and dying has never appealed to them very much, and from the beginning of time, they've tried to put off the inevitable just as long as possible. However, it's only in the last 50 years that modern medicine has helped man to increase his life span.

If you had been born way back in 1830, you would have had an average chance of living to be 45 years old. In other words, the life expectancy at birth in 1830 was only 45 years. Thousands of people died while they were still infants. And some lived to be a hundred. But, you got an average chance to be 45. That isn't very old.

It wasn't until 1901 that the life expectancy began to go up. Then, with the advance of modern medicine, it began to creep up pretty fast. If you were born only ten years later, in 1910, you could expect to live two more years. By 1920 you had another four years of life expectancy. And if you were born in 1954 (a few years one side or the other wouldn't make a great difference) you had a life expectancy at birth of better than 67 years (girls a little more, boys a little less). Keep in mind, too, that a lot of babies who were born in 1940 died the same year. And lots more died since 1940. So, actually, your life expectancy at the present time would be far beyond the age of 67 years. If you are a girl, and you are now 14 years old, you have an expectancy of 57 *additional* years of life. This gives you a life expectancy of 71 years.

Inheritance plays a part in determining how long you will live. Certain of your characteristics are inherited from your parents through tiny "blueprints" called genes. It is quite certain that no single gene or even a small number of genes causes a long life or a short one. But it seems that a person can inherit genes for a rugged or weak heart, a resistance to lung diseases and cancer or a lack of resistance, and so forth. And it is quite certain that, whatever kind of basic physical characteristics a person inherits, a great deal will depend on the kind of surroundings he has. After all, even the strongest heart can stand only so much. And—to make it completely obvious—if you try to argue with a fast freight train, a body that should have lasted you until you were 100 won't last more than a few seconds at best.

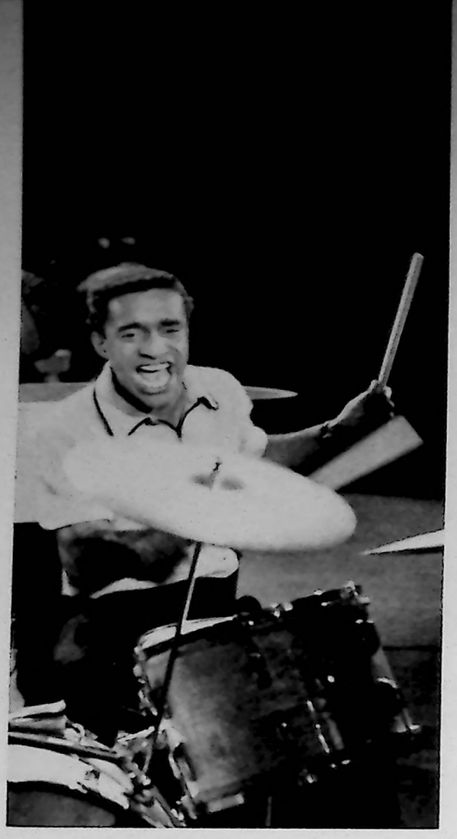
Heredity plays a basic and important role in determining how long you will live and how well you hold up while you live. It probably sets the outside limits on the length of time you can expect to live.

But within these limits—and just what they are for you or for anyone else cannot be determined—your life can be lengthened or shortened tremendously by how you lead it.

If you want to live longer, *you must begin working on it today. Your body, mind, and spirit will bear tomorrow the marks of today's doing.* The human body, mind, and spirit can weather abuse that a nonliving machine could not stand. But battering and abuse leave their record on the human machine.

Even childhood diseases may leave their mark. You may get over scarlet fever, tonsillitis, and rheumatic fever, but they may leave the heart valves scarred. Overactivity and continued fatigue may produce changes in the body machine that will show up in faster aging in later life. Overeating and carrying around pounds of fat you don't need put just that much more strain on the heart—and it may balk in later years. Habits that you are forming now may plague you later on. Refusing to accept yourself now—both your strengths and your weaknesses—may later cause you to drive yourself to strive for the impossible, to worry in your job and in your social life. This may shorten your life through increasing your chances of getting heart and circulatory diseases. It will certainly make your life less full and happy.

No one can live your life for you. In a way, you have three broad choices. You can live from day to day without regard for the future. Or you can become a hypochondriac and worry yourself into an even earlier grave than if you took a devil-may-care attitude about your health and your future. Or you can face the facts, use some common sense, and plan a life of fun *and* health. You make the choice, and the choice you make will have a lot to do with whether or not you live a long and happy life. ♦



THE BIRTH OF JAZZ MUSIC

by Gilbert Chase

NEW ORLEANS WAS THE BIRTHPLACE OF JAZZ MUSIC. Many strands went into the making of jazz. There were the traditional patterns and impulses of native African music, remote but potent in survival. There was the whole body of Afro-American folk song, the spirituals, the work songs, the ballads, the blues. There were the blackface minstrel tunes, which in turn had drawn upon the storehouse of Irish, Scottish, and British folk melody.

Closely related to minstrel music, and forming a principal link with jazz, was ragtime, the syncopated piano music of the 1890s. Important, too, was the heritage of Creole folk songs and dance tunes, which gave such a gay and brittle character to the popular music of New Orleans. It remains to show how these diverse and apparently heterogeneous elements entered the blood stream of jazz.

In the colorful, spectacular, exuberant life of the city, with its annual Mardi Gras processions, its frequent parades and celebrations of all kinds, brass bands occupied an important place. Brass bands were needed not only for parades and celebrations, but also for weddings and funerals, for picnics and excursions, in short, for every occasion that was either festive or solemn—and often the solemn was turned into the festive through the music of the marching bands, playing such gay tunes as *Gettysburg March*, *High Society*, and *Panama*.

In a city abounding with bands, there was no scarcity of musical instruments. After the Civil War, dispersed Confederate military bands provided a source of secondhand instruments. These became so plentiful and cheap that they were within the reach of everyone. There were many Negro, as well as white, bands in New Orleans during the nineteenth century. Negro fraternal and benevolent associations, and various labor organizations, had their own bands. More than a dozen Negro brass bands took part in the mammoth funeral procession for President Garfield in 1881.

The "hot" band music that developed through the New Orleans Negro street bands during this early period, roughly from about 1870 to 1890, has been termed "archaic jazz." It was mostly for street parades and funerals. The street bands would accompany the funeral cortege to the cemetery (interment is always aboveground in New Orleans), playing slow dirges, perhaps an adaptation of some old hymn or sentimental song. After the interment, on the way back, the band would begin to play gayer tunes, and the music would soon get "hot," in some familiar "leaving the cemetery" tune, such as *Oh, Didn't He Ramble.*

Meanwhile, there would be a "second line" of players walking along beside the band. This consisted of children, fascinated by the music and the shining instruments, whistling or singing the tunes, and trying to imitate a brass band with all kinds of improvised or homemade instruments. In this "second line," absorbing the elements of "hot" band music, there were assuredly many boys who grew up to be the makers and leaders of New Orleans jazz.

When "hot" brass bands began to be used for dancing, the era of jazz was definitely ushered in. It had been the custom previously, in Louisiana, to use string orchestras, sometimes with a piano, for dancing indoors, and the music they played was "sweet." When the powerful impetus of the street bands, with their contagious "hot" style, was unleashed on the dance floor, it was the beginning of a revolution in American popular music.

The most colorful figure associated with the beginnings of classic jazz in New Orleans was Charles "Buddy" Bolden (1868–1931), a barber with his own shop, and publisher of a scandal sheet called *The Cricket.* He learned to play the cornet in his spare time, and in the early 1890s formed a band that was in wide demand both for parades and dances. It was a small band, consisting of from five to seven pieces. During the twelve years or more of its existence, the personnel of Bolden's Band included many of the great pioneers of hot jazz.

There is a difference of opinion as to the extent of Bolden's musical training and knowledge. "Bunk" Johnson, who played second cornet in Bolden's band in 1895–1897, wrote years later: "Buddy could not read a note, but he surely played a good stiff lead and would have in maybe six sharps before you finished, but I could always go anywhere the King went. We played parades and advertising wagons and excuse me for the expression, honky-tonks, and together we made many famous blues." Bolden was called "King" after his skill, his personality, and his enterprise had given him the ascendancy over other pioneer trumpet players in New Orleans.

The father of white or Dixieland jazz was Jack "Papa" Laine, leader of several bands including the Reliance Brass Band, dating from about 1892–1893, and Jack Laine's Ragtime Band. The latter set the style for Dixieland jazz and is therefore of considerable historical importance. Laine himself played the drums in his Ragtime Band; the other instruments consisted of cornet, clarinet, trombone, guitar, and string bass. It should be pointed out that before the term "jazz" came into general usage, this type of hot music, whether for band or piano, was called "ragtime" in New Orleans. Hence the title of Laine's band.

Another white New Orleans outfit was the Tom Brown Band which was discovered by a promoter in 1914 and brought to Chicago the following year, opening an engagement at Lamb's Cafe in June, 1915, and thereby launching the vogue of Dixieland jazz that soon would sweep the country.

The success of Brown's Band stimulated the search for more New Orleans talent. In 1916 a promoter from Chicago contracted Alcide "Yellow" Nunez, the clarinetist, and a group of four other players: Eddie Edwards (trombone), Dominique "Nick" La Rocca (cornet), Henry Ragas (piano), and Tony Sbarbaro (drums). This band opened at Schiller's Cafe under the name of Dixieland Jass Band. With somewhat different personnel, and calling itself the Original Dixieland Jass Band, this outfit went to New York in 1917 and began a sensational engagement at Reisenweber's Restaurant. It was this band that made the first recordings in 1917, of Dixieland jazz. Among these pioneer recordings were *Tiger Rag, Reisenweber Rag, Barnyard Blues, At the Jazz Band Ball, Ostrich Walk, Bluin' the Blues,* and *Clarinet Marmalade.*

The Original Dixieland Jass Band went to England in 1919, and gave a big impulse to European interest in jazz.

In the words of Jelly Roll Morton: "Jazz music is a style not a composition." One might modify that by saying that it is not a *written* composition; but assuredly, in the act of performance, the style creates a *composition,* that is, a piece of music with a definite form and texture. In any case, the style and the music must be heard to be known, and the history of jazz means nothing without the phonograph recordings that give it life and substance. Fortunately, there is available a recorded historical anthology of jazz, issued by Folkways Records, which the reader will find of immense value in tracing the antecedents, the genesis, and the growth of jazz.

We have no recordings by Negro bands from the early classic New Orleans period. Our knowledge of what New Orleans jazz was like during this period comes partly from collateral sources (personal recollections and descriptions) and partly from later recorded performances of players who were active in New Orleans during the classic period, such as King Oliver, Sidney Bechet, Jelly Roll Morton, Bunk Johnson, and others.

In view of the importance of the New Orleans street bands in the emergence of jazz, it may be well to note what Jelly Roll Morton says about the early Negro street bands:

"All we had in a band, as a rule, was bass horn, trombone, trumpet, an alto horn and maybe a baritone horn, bass, and snare drum—just seven pieces, but, talking about noise, you never heard a sixty-piece band make as much noise as we did."

According to Louis Armstrong, the influence of Scott Joplin's piano rags was "great" among the pioneer jazzmen. Said Armstrong: "If you played his music and phrased it right, you was *swinging* way back there!"

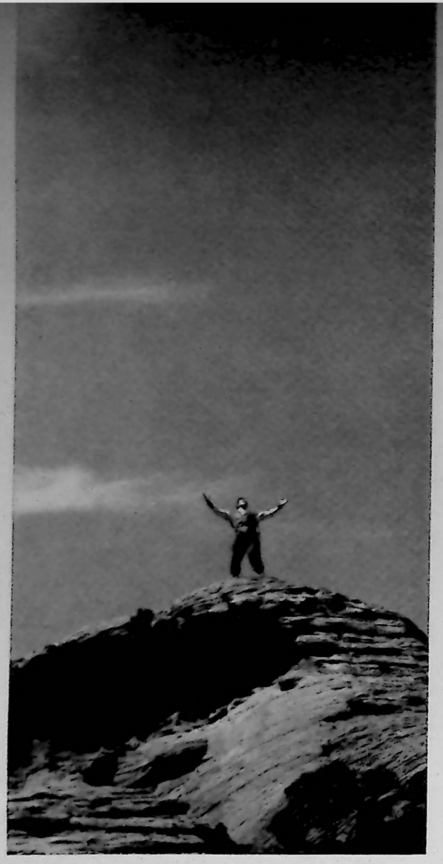
Ragtime was played in the South not only by honky-tonk pianists but also by small instrumental groups that might include, in addition to guitar, banjo, and mandolin, such unorthodox instruments as washboard and jug. Here is Jelly Roll Morton reminiscing about the old "spasm" bands that played for "any jobs they could get in the streets":

"They did a lot of ad-libbing in ragtime style with different solos in succession, not in a regular routine, but just as one guy would get tired and let another musician have the lead."

Morton claimed to have created the famous *Tiger Rag* from a French quadrille. In his own picturesque language:

"The Tiger Rag I happened to transform from an old quadrille, which was originally in many different tempos. First there was an introduction, 'Everybody get your partners!' and the people would go rushing around the hall getting their partners. After five minutes of lapse of time, the next strain would be the waltz strain . . . Then another strain that comes right beside the waltz strain in mazooka time. . . . We had two other strains in two-four time. Then I transformed these strains into the tiger rag which I also named, from the way I made the 'Tiger' roar with my elbow."

There was also what Jelly Roll calls the "Spanish" influence, though it was more specifically a Caribbean influence, and still more precisely, an Afro-American influence. It is the Negro influence that gives to the popular music of the Caribbean, and Latin America, the traits that distinguish it from European music. ♦



THE VIRTUES OF HUMILITY

by R. Lofton Hudson

PHILLIPS BROOKS ONCE SAID that when he began preaching, he wondered why everyone did not come to hear him, but after he had been preaching for a number of years he wondered why anyone came. If you have any humility it will probably be a good thing if you never find it out, for like the rest of the human race, you would probably be proud even of your humility. Humility which sees itself is not true humility; for as someone has said, "humility is an eye which sees everything but itself."

Few people really want to be humble, at least in the sense in which most people think of humility. In fact, humility is in such bad repute, as popularly understood, that most of us would not want to admit being humble. It seems to be a weak, sissy, groveling, sniveling sort of virtue. We have all seen people who talked about their humility—like Uriah Heep in Dickens' novel—but had so many inconsistencies in their lives that we could not admire them.

This kind of humility is a dangerous "virtue." It is the means by which people are often beaten down and kept down, by fear and shame. Religion has often resorted to this false kind of humility to keep people under control, make them obey. And it has done harm to human personality. It has become a "splendid vice."

Elton Trueblood has said, "True humility is not thinking badly of oneself, which is another form of attention to self; true humility is not thinking of oneself at all." This sounds good, but really it is an impossible ideal. We *must* think of ourselves. Our self-concept is essential to our self-direction.

The best way we can understand humility is to remember that a child, as he comes to realize that he is an individual, must first bow down to his parents. The parents may control him by fear and shame. They may cause him to feel that if he does not squelch his own personality and accept the authority and power of others, he will be completely rejected. Such a child often comes to make a transfer in religion of this kind of relationship with his parents. In other words, if the parents did not allow him to be himself, he expects the same sort of injustice from God.

This kind of humility breeds authoritarianism. Authoritarianism means that we bow down to other people who may not be any better equipped than we are to think for themselves or to lead. We find it easier to become submissive than to stand upon our own feet and be the kind of human beings we were created to be. Authoritarianism in religion drives down pegs and says, "We now have the last word on the subject. Believe what we say and be saved! There is nothing more to be found out or to be revealed by God." Authoritarianism in culture is also a very vicious thing. It tends to label any deviation from past rules and customs as "bad." Authoritarianism in politics or economics, in which we assume that any present system is the best possible system, is equally bad. On every hand, in every realm of thought, we find people who prefer to remain in a static position rather than grow and reach out to greater approximation of the truth.

Thomas Huxley, the great scientist, in a letter to Charles Kingsley, once said, "Science seems to me to teach in the highest and strongest manner, the great truth which is embodied in the concept of entire surrender to the will of God. Sit down before the facts as a little child, be prepared to give up every preconceived notion, follow humbly wherever . . . nature leads you, or you shall learn nothing." This attitude of a true scientist is the attitude that people ought to have in religion or in any realm.

But even true humility is distasteful to humanity.

For to be humble, we must admit that there are limits to our knowledge. To grow we must be dissatisfied with ourselves. We must acknowledge our indebtedness. We must affirm that we are men and not gods. There seems to be a deep desire on man's part to be a god. "Ye shall be as gods," said Satan to the first pair of human beings.

Paul Ramsey, the modern theologian, sees clearly that humility is not that "a great man (must) make a mistake about himself and think less highly of himself than he ought to think, or pretend to do so." On the other hand, he says, "There can be no true humility without some sense, implicit or explicit, of one's relation to God, an acknowledgement that man lives out his existence under a power and a goodness which are above him." He must depend on God "for everything he is and has."

Perhaps "everything" is too strong a word. But man must depend upon God for the best things. He must not think for a moment that he is sufficient. God is God and man is man. As Karl Barth has pointed out: "The relation between such a God and such a man, and the relation between such a man and such a God, is for me the theme of the Bible and essence of philosophy." Without this sense

of inadequacy in the presence of God and without the hope that the revelation of God brings, man isolates himself from God. This is pride. It gives man a false sense of his "manness." He almost imagines himself to be a god. He plays God. He acts as if he were the "sufficient one."

He may declare that he cannot understand grace, or faith, or repentance, or justification. But the truth is that he resists God unconsciously, and consciously rationalizes against Him. Therefore, humility is a religious doctrine. Therefore, also, it is a decision. He says yes to God and no to the ungodly inner demand to be a god.

This sounds strange, doesn't it? But it is true. And the Bible is trying to tell us over and over that humility is the mainspring of all other human virtues.

You see, humility is a very practical doctrine. It is not putting ourselves down into the dust, even though the word itself comes from the Latin word for earth. It means that we are of the earth—earthy. It also means that we are come from God. While we are not worms of the dust, neither are we gods. Humility puts man in his place, but primarily it is a doctrine of relationship, a doctrine that says, "I must find my proper place in relationship to my fellow human beings and God." So let us think of some of the tests of humility.

First, one of the best tests of whether a man is truly humble is how he reacts to frustration. How do you act when you are blocked on the road to some cherished goal? Not long ago, someone brought me a little plaque on humility with this message:

"Humility is perpetual quietness of heart. It is to have no trouble. It is never to be fretted or vexed, irritable or sore; to wonder at nothing that is done to me, to feel nothing done against me. It is to be at rest when nobody praises me, and when I am blamed or despised, it is to have a blessed home in myself where I can go in and shut the door and kneel to my Father in secret and be at peace, as in a deep sea of calmness, when all around and about is seeming trouble."

Many times when we are sick we cannot do the things we can normally do when we are well, and we react like children—we pity ourselves. We are overcome or overwhelmed by feelings of worthlessness. Or when we fail, we find ourselves saying, "We should not have failed." It is a blow to our self-regard. Or think of old age. It is a tragedy to a person who is proud. One hates to lose her beauty; another hates to lose his youth. Neither can stand the loss and be happy.

In the second place, how do you take success or power? A man who is not humble, the minute he has power, will begin to "throw his weight around," to feel that he now has the right to exert influence over other people and, if necessary, to crush them. But a big man is one who puts himself down on the level of those who may not have the same standing as he has with the crowd.

Dr. Hofstadter, associate professor of history at Columbia University, wrote a book a few years ago in which he says this of Abraham Lincoln: "The best measure of Lincoln's personal eminence in the human calendar, is that he was chastened, and not intoxicated by power."

All of us have seen men who could not resist that temptation. A person gets a little education or makes some money, and immediately he gets more and more selfish, bigoted, narrow, and self-centered. But the truly great man is the one who realizes that he is a steward of that which God has given him—that if he has been given talents to make money or to influence people, he has even greater responsibility in using these talents well before his Creator.

Another test of your humility is how you get along with other people. Think of the elder brother of the so-called prodigal son when he found that his younger brother had gone away from home. He must have been very glad to get rid of him. At least when he returned, the elder brother "was mad and would not come in." Such a spirit often finds itself expressed in churches. People get mad and arrogant and intolerant toward each other. That spirit affects the business world, too. How do you feel about your competitors? How do you get along with them? Can you look at their faults with understanding? Do you envy them? Do you find yourself hating them?

Again, we must show humility toward those who may be less fortunate than we. A man who feels that he is better than other people is always a man who is little, unconscious that he needs the sympathy of people because he is a damaged soul. When you find a humble man, you find a man who does not think he is better than other human beings. He may realize that he has something that they do not have in some respects, but he knows also that God has made us as individuals to live and to act in our distinctive capacities.

Spinoza said, "Pride is the pleasure arising from a man's thinking too highly of himself." And Alexander Pope, the English poet, spoke of pride as the "never-failing vice of fools." Wentworth described a man who "with the food of pride sustained his soul in solitude."

How do you get along with other people? When you are around them, do you put them at ease—can they know that you are not going to hurt them, that you respect them—or do you put yourself higher and wait for them to knock you off your pedestal? Proud people unconsciously invite attack by others even if they say nothing, but humble people are always in a position to serve others because they know that they are made of the same clay as all the rest of the human race.

A fourth test of humility is how a man reacts to the claims of faith. We often overlook the fact that religion is one of the best indexes to personality, to what really makes us "tick" inside. For example, salvation is a very odious word to people who are not humble. Who are we to need saving? Does a man have to have help from someone else? Can't he stand on his own feet and be self-reliant? That is the attitude of the world. Why should I need someone to save me? I'm getting along all right.

Or take prayer. Why should I pray? I can run my own life. I'm not under obligation to bow down and confess my sins to God. I do not owe anyone anything. I live my own life. I make my own way. Why should I be calling on someone for help? That is the attitude of a man who is proud.

Or better still, look at our attitude toward obedience. We know that moral laws are right; few men would argue against the Ten Commandments. But when a man is proud, he feels that he is an exception, that it is not his business to obey God. Even though it is good for the masses, it is not necessary that he humble himself and abide by the laws of God or man. So instead of being obedient, he either secretly, or sometimes publicly, defies the law and says, "As much as I can, I will do as I please."

No lowly service, no binding of the wounds of the beaten, no confession of sins, no sacrifice—not for those people who have never learned humility.

Yet it seems such a foolish thing for us to think so well of ourselves and to put ourselves so high when, after all, we are poor, weak, distressed, needy human beings. As William Knox has it in his poem, "Mortality,"

O, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?
Like a swift-fleeting meteor, a fast-flying cloud,
A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,
Man passeth from life to his rest in the grave. ♦

THE IDEALIST AND THE REALIST - JEFFERSON AND HAMILTON

by Leland Dewitt Baldwin

THE HISTORIAN WHO LOOKS BACK upon the formative days of the Nation can scarcely avoid the realization that it would have been tragic for either of the two great wings of American opinion to have won a clear-cut and sweeping victory. As it was, the two great opponents, Hamilton and Jefferson, each had to consider the will of the other in carrying out his program, with the result that something like an unhappy medium was struck between them.

Hamilton's Federalists got their way initially. They assumed the state debts, thus centering the good wishes of the creditor class on the Federal government, set up a bank, laid a light protective tariff to encourage manufactures, and laid an excise on whiskey largely to bring home to the frontier the fact that a strong central government was now in existence.

Alexander Hamilton came into the office of Secretary of the Treasury at the age of thirty-two with his political philosophy already developed and with an economic program for putting it into effect. It is wrong to say that he dominated President Washington, yet Washington was old and tired and so disposed to accept Hamilton's ideas, especially since on the whole they agreed with his own. The touchstone of Hamilton's life and policy was his fear and loathing of the people. He acknowledged that his social ideal was met in Japan: "a mass of intelligent humanity, reckless of their lives, yet filled with the joy of life, eager for distinction, hungry for success, alert, practical, and merry; but at the same time subordinate, to a pure abstraction."

Hamilton favored monarchy and supported aristocracy because they had nothing to gain by a change; he seems never to have understood the value of the democratic process, though like all democratic conservatives (how he would have loathed the tag!) he yielded to the rising counterforce. He envisioned the United States as another England, with great industrial cities, with workers crowding in from Europe, and ruled over by an aristocracy which because it had everything it wanted could not be subject to temptation.

Hamilton's program was in its essentials what the country needed if it was ever to become a nation. Perhaps it was in the long view fortunate that the counterforce was not in the beginning well enough organized to block the force. Though the counterforce was represented from the first by such leaders as James Madison of Virginia, it failed to get much backing either in Congress or among the people until the actual results of Hamilton's program demonstrated beyond the shadow of a doubt that a new Tory party had developed and was devoted to promoting the political, social, and economic ascendancy of an aristocracy of wealth and position.

Jefferson was the political genius chiefly responsible for giving the inchoate opposition the semblance of party discipline and a party program. Thomas Jefferson came out of the Virginia Piedmont at a time when it was more authentically western in spirit than California is today. Though he is rightly called a philosopher, and like philosophers dreamed of "the good society," it is notable that he expressed his ideas and program in practical terms.

Aristocracy in itself was certainly not an object of his hatred, for he sought to spread its gospel of taste, refinement, education, and competent leadership—but not its abuses. Property was not the enemy, for he sought to spread and increase it, though he did assert that its possession was not one of the Natural Rights. Religion was not the enemy except as it was used to uphold special privileges.

Jefferson was not (at least after the Revolution) a radical bent upon overthrowing established institutions or uprooting the social tree. He believed in working calmly and slowly by education, and that if the people received light they would find their own way. And yet he recognized the danger that popular "whims" might institute a tyranny of the majority. The minority also had rights; the majority to be right must be reasonable.

He fought against any attempt to rivet the ideological chains of one generation upon the next. Amendment of the Constitution instead of being thwarted should be deliberately undertaken every twenty years or so. Moreover, freedom was not necessarily synonymous with peace. "The Tree of Liberty," he said, "must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants."

Basically Jefferson taught that government is the natural enemy of man, hence his insistence that as many functions as possible must be localized so that the people might be able to control them directly. Government must not be permitted to do anything for the people that they could do themselves, hence "that government is best which governs least"; by protraction it followed that the cheapest government was the best, an idea which still has exponents. Jefferson opposed the interference of the government to

strengthen or enrich a class, especially to give it the subtle and intangible forms of wealth (stocks and bonds) which he believed arose from the exploitation of others.

To the lawyer, then, principally in the persons of the jurists of the Supreme Court, goes the credit for making the slightly considered third branch of the Federal government a decisive instrument for preserving balance within that government and between it and the states. It paved the legal road for the creation of a nation in place of the congeries of sovereign states which existed at the outset of the nineteenth century, and whose rivalries among themselves and with the Federal government might have torn the Union apart. Marshall, Story, and Kent also laid the necessary foundations for the growth of industrial capitalism.

When Jefferson retired from the presidency he placed his own bust and that of Hamilton facing each other in the great hall of his home in Monticello, and there they still stand, opposite each other in death as in life. This position is fitting, for they personify the two great forces of democratic evolution. Each was, and is, necessary to the other, just as without protagonist and antagonist there can be no drama.

As Jefferson himself said: "The terms Whig and Tory belong to natural as well as to civil history. They denote the temper and constitution of mind of different individuals." In another place he was even more explicit: "In every free and deliberating society, there must, from the nature of man be opposite parties, and violent dissensions and discords; and one of these, for the most part, must prevail over the other for a longer or shorter time. Perhaps this party division is necessary to induce each other to watch and to relate to the people at large the proceedings of the other."

The true principles of Hamilton and Jefferson lie much deeper. They can perhaps be best expressed respectively in the two catchwords "order" and "liberty." Hamilton did not reject liberty, of course; he simply believed that it must give precedence to order. Jefferson did not reject order; he simply believed that order without liberty is of no value, and that to preserve or extend liberty its tree must sometimes be refreshed by the blood of tyrants and of patriots.

Hamilton was the realist, the practical man of affairs who thought in terms of dollars and cents and saw that they could not be amassed and protected without a high degree of public order. Jefferson was the idealist, the man of faith and optimism who believed that happiness is the end of human existence and the only defensible purpose of government—and how could a man be happy without liberty?

Jefferson thought of the small farmers as the bulwark of democracy, because in their independence and economic equality he saw the only feasible way of reconciling liberty and equality. If there is complete liberty (individualism), the danger is that those with luck, initiative, or shrewdness will gain an undue share of economic power—and with it will come inequality, because they will have the power to oppress their fellows.

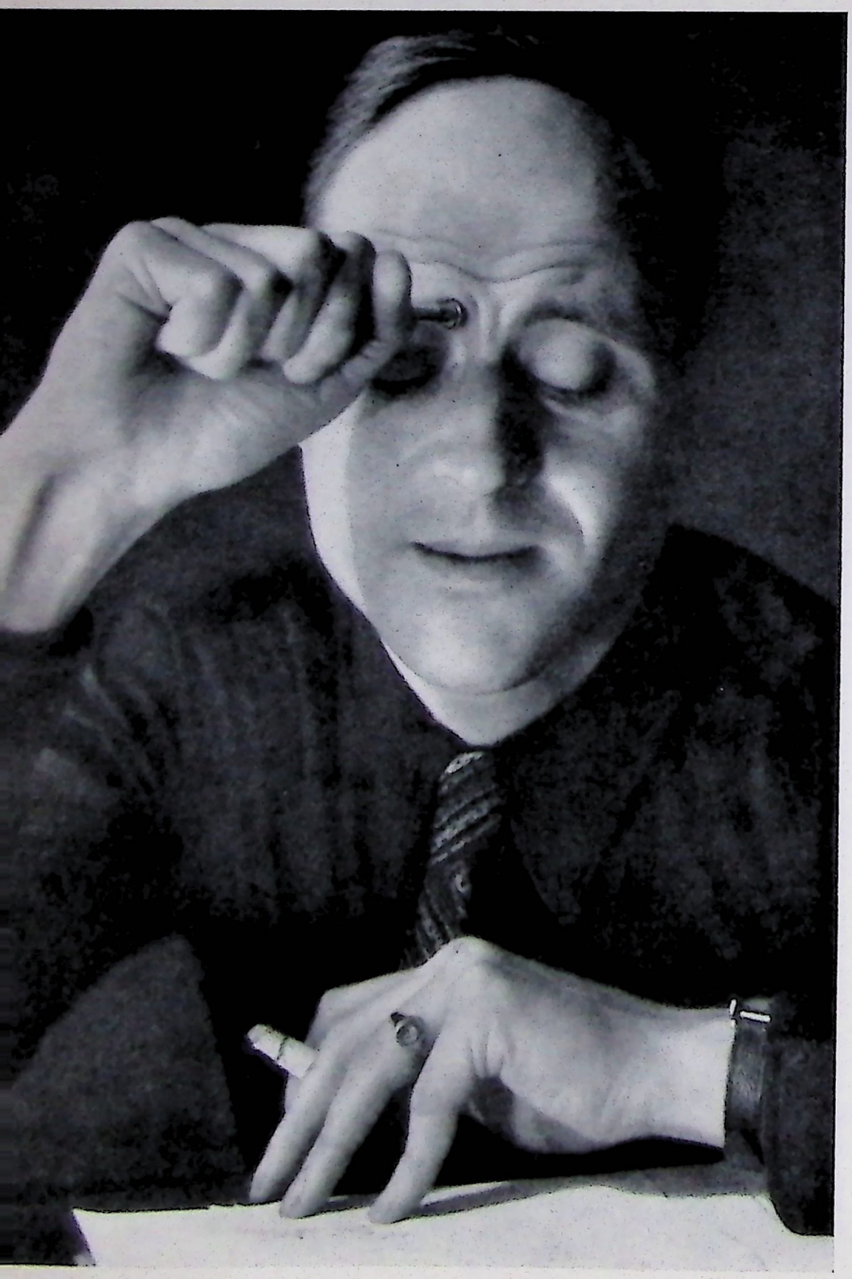
During his whole life Jefferson was concerned with finding the balance between liberty and equality, for he was not so foolish as to think that a wide distribution of property would be an automatic stabilizer. He proposed a solution that was quite in keeping with his faith in human nature. Let men be educated to their responsibilities, let them restrain themselves from deliberately overturning the balance between liberty and equality, and let them have the courage to fight any such attempts. The form of government was important, but secondary. What counted was the willingness of democrats to live virtuously and deal justly with their fellow men.

It was Hamilton who first saw that the United States was poorly balanced economically and that manufacture and commerce needed to be fostered in order to promote prosperity and national security; it was only after years of buffeting that Jefferson got the point, and even then his consent was grudging. Certainly in this respect Hamilton deserves to be called progressive; by the same token Jefferson, with his desire to preserve a nation of small farmers, was a conservative. It is confusing, unless we interpret liberalism and conservatism as political attitudes, not necessarily economic or administrative tags.

Hamilton was the head, Jefferson the heart. Hamilton was science, Jefferson was democracy; and though they may clash, neither can live long without the other. Hamilton was might, Jefferson was right. Might gives to right the power to survive, and right gives to might the moral reason to fight for survival. Thus in eternal conflict, eternal compromise, and eternal interdependence Hamilton and Jefferson have lived since there were men on this earth and will live as long as men remain. ♦

LEARNING TO CONCENTRATE

by Col. Arthur L. Logan



It is very difficult to concentrate on any and all subjects. Interest has a great bearing on the amount and length of concentration. Sometimes, however, we have to concentrate on things which are not too interesting, so we should practice it.

Let's compare our eyes and brain to a camera. We know there is a similarity as the image through the lens of a camera is upside down on the negative, just as the image through our eyes is transmitted back into our brain upside down.

What happens when we take a picture? We focus the camera carefully, being sure that the lens has the right opening for the brightness of the day, the distance of the object from the camera, and the size of the object. We then frame the object to be photographed inside the view-finder, and we are sure to get this object in the center of the view-finder so that the picture will contain the object we desire to photograph, not some other objects around it, or near it. When we have it all centered, we hold the camera very still and trip the shutter. The result: a perfect, clearly defined picture, registered for life on the negative and capable of being reproduced as many times as we want.

What would have happened if we had *not focused* properly? If we had *not centered* the picture properly in the view-finder, or if we had *moved* the camera as we tripped the shutter, the picture would have been blurred, indistinct, and probably not a complete picture of the object. In other words, the negative could not be used to reproduce other pictures because the object to be photographed could not be distinguished sufficiently well to be of any value.

So it is when we use our minds, when we meet people and make no attempt to concentrate on their names. The name is spoken, we haven't heard it; even if we have, we pay no attention to it, but we start talking, telling the new acquaintance all about ourselves, and walk away never knowing to whom we have talked. He probably doesn't know us either, and the chances are he doesn't care.

What should we have done? We should have focused our attention on his face, on any outstanding feature or mannerism, concentrated on his name, getting a picture of him and his peculiarities, and of his name until he was permanently on our mind, just as a picture is in a negative. Let him talk; he is giving us clues which we file away in that picture, making it complete. We can't help but call his name the next time we see him.

The same thing is true when we work. How many of us dictate a letter or talk on the phone to someone and reach over to our calendar pad and make a note to call John Jones or Bill Smith, or even push a button to give some instructions to someone, all the time priding ourselves that we are smart, we can do several things at the same time. But can we? Actually, we are only doing one thing at a time, for we have ceased to dictate or pay attention when the foreign thought about Bill Jones pops into our minds. What we have is a quick mind, or a scattered one, and we are unable to hold it under control long enough to dictate a letter. It is a valuable thing that our mind travels at a fast rate; we can talk and think a lot faster than someone can take shorthand, and we can think even faster than we can talk. We do these things in between our words and seem not to lose our trend of thought. We would have a better letter, though, if we had stuck to the business of dictating and concentrated on the matter at hand.

Here is a test you can do yourself. Sit down and look at your pen set, your desk lamp, or your blotter, and concentrate on it. Think of what you do with it, how it is made, who has handled it, everything about the object that you can think of. Go around it in your thinking but don't let *any foreign thought* creep into your mind. No Bill Jones, no notes on what to do tomorrow, no thought of your date tonight—nothing—just the object at hand. When a thought crosses your mind that has nothing to do with the object, stop—you are through concentrating. Time yourself. At first, you will probably be

able to concentrate only 25 or 30 seconds; but as you practice this every day you will find that you will improve—one minute—three minutes—five—ten and twenty minutes. Use more complex objects, as you get better at it, or use certain phases of your work. You will be surprised at how much you know and how much clearer the phases of your job will become. It will also become a time saver, because after learning to concentrate on a problem at hand, and learning to take one problem at a time, you will be able to do twice as much work in half the time because *all* of your faculties are *focused* on the problem.

Have you ever tried to learn a poem or practice a speech as you dressed or shaved? You probably didn't do a very good job of either, but if you had taken half the time for each, and concentrated on what you were doing, you would have found that the shave would be closer and neater, and the poem clearer and better remembered. Try concentrating on the simple matter of dressing, as each article is put on, as you wash and shave, and you will be surprised how many extra motions are made when one goes through these actions daily, thinking of something else.

Few people concentrate even ten minutes a day. Someone has said that "My memory is good, but I do not give it proper attention; concentration will cure it." Concentration will cure a poor memory, but if the truth were told, very few people have poor memories, it is just lack of *attention* and *concentration*.

I had a very illuminating experience a short while ago. Addressing an audience of 3,000 at the University of Maryland, I asked that we try an experiment. In order to find out how well the people in the audience concentrated, I suggested that everyone think of their Thanksgiving dinner (this was about a week later). I wanted them to concentrate on that dinner, starting at the beginning and going all the way through it. When any other thought interjected itself in their minds, a thought which had nothing to do with Thanksgiving dinners, their concentration was at an end and they were to raise their hands. In about 10 seconds, hands started up; 15, 20, 25, 30 seconds, more and more hands. I stopped it at about one minute, and more than half of the people in the audience had their hands up. These were students studying for degrees. How did they study and retain what they had studied if they couldn't concentrate? I'll admit that a Thanksgiving dinner is not too glamorous as a topic for conversation, but it is a definite event, and should be easy to think about in comparison with some of the more abstract subjects with which students mentally wrestle.

Concentration can be improved, and as you improve it, so do you improve your ability to retain thoughts and ideas which you want to retain regardless of whether they are in the subject you are studying or in your everyday work. How often have you heard an explanation to a problem or a discussion concerning your business, and your mind has wandered to the blonde at the next desk, or a hunting or fishing trip on which you are going. You might be surprised at what someone is saying if you really listened and concentrated.

The mind is like a wild horse; it must be conquered. A tight rein is necessary or it will run away, always seeking the pleasant thoughts, never quite willing of its own accord to buckle down and work. So a hard rein is necessary to make the mind shut out all outside noises, attractions and distractions, and think only and completely of the subject at hand. Once this will-power over the mind has been attained, everything is possible.

Absentmindedness is not necessarily lack of concentration. A professor who is solving a knotty problem in his mind and walks out in the snow without his hat is absentminded, yes—as far as the hat is concerned, but not as far as his problem is concerned. He is giving his whole attention and concentration to his problem; fortunately he breathes automatically or he would probably forget to do that. The hat is not an automatic subject such as breathing, so he forgets it.

Most of us are absentminded to some degree, and probably it shows most when we meet people. We see the face, we like it or we don't like it, but we absentmindedly forget the name, if we heard it at all. Consequently, we often say, "I remember faces, but I can't remember names." Yes, as we meet people, pictures are taken as we see them, and impressions are formed, and be they good or bad, we do remember their faces. The old Chinese saying is an apt one in this connection, "A picture is worth ten thousand words." Yes, we see the face and remember it, but even if ten thousand words were spoken, the chances are that we would forget the name.

Don Quixote said, "My memory is so bad that I often forget my own name," and I wonder sometimes why many of us don't.

If real attention and concentration, however, were given to the sound, the spelling, and the visualization of the other person's name; if all other ideas and thoughts were eliminated except his face and name, the camera of our minds would take a clear, concise picture and we would remember the face and the name always. Concentration is like scratching hard steel; once it is scratched, nothing can be done to erase that definite picture.

Concentration is the one essential item required in study. Even the system for improvement of study is of no value unless concentration is present. One can read, recite, rehearse, and work many long hours only to find that at the end, he remembers nothing, simply because all during the time of study he has been unable to harness that horse of a mind and keep it on the subject. His mind has jumped from one thing to another; he has tried to hold those wild horses in check, but with no success. He would probably have been better off at a movie.

What, then, shall we do with our minds in order to improve this much needed power of concentration. It is the same old story of any skill one desires to perfect—practice, practice, practice. We must try to hold some idea, some thought in our mind for a certain period of time, and every day attempt to keep the runaway mind in check. Once we are able to keep the mind under control for a definite period of time, we will find that our ability to retain material will improve. The beauty of this practice is that it requires no equipment. We can practice while walking, while waiting for a streetcar, while waiting for an appointment, any time when we are at leisure and have nothing definite to do. Hold an idea in your mind, dwell on it, consider it from all angles, and rejoice when you have been able to close out of your mind all irrelevant things which attempt to intrude. Begin with a simple, and to you, highly interesting incident. Live it through to the end. As time goes on, more complex and more educational subjects can be used, but in the beginning, it is necessary to have a high interest factor. Many other thoughts will attempt to crowd in; hold them off, keep your mind under strict control. Soon you will be able to sit in a crowded room and read a book, without any disturbance from others around you. You have seen people who are completely oblivious to what goes on around them as they read. They are able to control their thoughts, to concentrate so well that nothing can get through to them. My father was able to concentrate that way. I can remember my mother calling him and receiving no answer. She always remarked that he never heard anything when he got his nose in a book. He was interested in what he was reading, and he was concentrating.

Practice concentrating every day. Time yourself, and you will discover that each day the period of concentration will increase. Each day you will be richer for the thoughts and ideas you have retained—all due to the increased effort you are making to learn and understand. Interest, motivation and concentration go hand in hand, and without all three it is a difficult task to learn and to improve your memory, whether it be for facts or names. ♦

IMPROVING YOUR READING ABILITY

by J. Hooper Wise

IN THE MODERN WORLD OF PRINT, where 80 to 90 per cent of all study activities require silent reading as a means of gaining knowledge, no one with a desire to be well informed can afford to be a slow and inefficient reader. Great waste, both academic and economic, results annually from the inability of students and the general public to read effectively. Indeed, Arthur I. Gates has estimated "that if every literate American over fifteen years of age who spends two hours or more a day in reading could be given training in reading for a month, the saving in time required to do the nation's workaday reading, valued at fifty cents an hour, would amount to more than five billion dollars."

For many years it has been a complaint of teachers from the elementary school through the university that many students fail, whether in English, history, science, or mathematics, because they cannot read. That seems by careful investigation to be truly descriptive of the situation. Studies in high schools and colleges throughout this country have shown a strong positive relationship between a student's ability to read and his ability to succeed with his general schoolwork, particularly with those subjects in which considerable reading is involved. This relationship assumes increasing importance as the movement toward general education spreads.

You may be surprised to know that college students are quite often found with the reading ability of tenth graders; certainly, you will be astonished to learn that some college students interpret the printed page no better than children in the seventh grade! But, as good fortune has it, reading ability *can* be improved. No matter how old you are, you can improve with correct and persistent practice. If you read badly, you can improve. If you read well, you can still improve. This means that everyone can learn to read better —within the range of his intellectual capacity, of course. The degree of efficiency one can cultivate in reading, even in a short time, is surprising. Improvement can, and should, continue throughout your intellectual life.

The efficient learners are attention and intention. If you would learn, give your attention to the undertaking and set about it with the intention to succeed. In other words, there must be *willing concentration;* without that, exercises to improve comprehension and speed of reading can be no more than humdrum busy-work. Learning is always an active process.

Reading is a highly synthetic activity. In the main, whatever aids in improving one's comprehension likewise may produce an increase in one's speed of reading. Notwithstanding this overlapping there are some fairly obvious factors which primarily influence one's comprehension. Assuming a mental ability of average or above, let us examine some of the more important of these factors and outline a program for improvement.

Underlying genuine progress in acquiring better comprehension (or succeeding at any endeavor) is purposeful activity. The more interested you are in what you are reading, the more likely you are to understand it. Interest is not, however, absolutely essential for comprehension. No doubt you can and do understand, every day of your life, matter in which you have no interest whatever. Interest acts mainly as a driving force. The relationship between it and comprehension is probably due to the greater background of information you have acquired in subjects in which you are interested. But no full and sustained progress will be made without a motive supported by interest.

This practice of analysis will immeasurably add to your fuller understanding and evaluation of what you read. There are, however, two principles to keep in mind. In the first place, the analysis and other techniques are after all techniques and serve only one purpose —to aid you in getting as full meaning as possible from the printed page. Don't become engrossed with the technique and lose sight of the end in reading—namely, to determine the writer's purpose. Imagine the result if a driver became so interested in the gadgets on his car that he forgot where he was going. You should learn a method of attack which you can apply in any reading situation, solving the problem in a way which is most illuminating. Every piece of reading which deserves analytical consideration, must be attacked by the method which the writer's style and organization make practicable. You will have made incalculable progress when in your reading you recognize divisions and units of thought which the writer marks off through transitional expressions, topical statements, summarizing sentences, and other directional language uses, when you get meaning from the connotations and references, and when you appreciate the stylistic qualities of the writer.

A second consideration—and a major one—in increasing comprehension is vocabulary extension. Since we think in word-symbols and receive and transmit ideas by means of language, breadth of vocabulary is, no doubt, a matter of primary importance. Johnson O'Connor affirms that an exact and extensive vocabulary is an important concomitant of one's success, measured either by his income or by the rank of his position. It goes without saying that words are the *sine qua non* of success in academic pursuits.

There should be a systematic study of words on the part of every serious-minded person. This should extend to technical words, to those of less common use and to words which should be in the working vocabulary of every adult. Often the definitions of technical words given in the texts are preferable to definitions found in a standard dictionary and should not be overlooked. As you read, you should check lightly unfamiliar words which are not defined in the context, and later look them up in your dictionary. In general, the practice of pausing, while reading, to consult your dictionary is not a good one. When an unfamiliar word occurs occasionally, so long as the sense of the material is not in doubt, it is usually sufficient to check the word for further study to make sure that the interpretation put upon it represents the author's meaning. Remember that the more words you make your faithful and obedient slaves, the more you become the master of your own thought processes and those of others. Count the day lost when you add no new words to your working vocabulary.

Reading a selection for the central idea and major subordinate ideas, analyzing the material for a fuller mastery of the writer's thought, and capturing the unfamiliar words encountered are not enough; there are still important considerations. The principal library aids and tools must become so familiar to you that you may make constant and ready use of them in extending your knowledge; that is, in broadening your comprehension. Thoughts received through listening and reading must be transmitted in speaking and in writing; the former, according to Bacon, will make you a ready man while the latter will make you an exact man. Moreover, there

is necessity for an extensive and varied reading program, which will enable you not only to add to your store of information and ideas but also to extend your vocabulary through recognizing words as parts of thought patterns.

He who wishes to read more effectively, therefore, must always work toward more complete comprehension. But this is not enough. He must also increase his speed. As already stated, those practices which increase your comprehension will, in turn, increase your rate —barring psychological handicaps and faulty physiological habits.

In the first place, you may fail to recognize the importance of speed in reading. It may have never occurred to you how serious is your problem if you are reading 200 words a minute (that's the fifth-grade level) when the average college freshman reads about 325 and when you could probably more than double your rate. As a matter of fact, it's possible to read more than 1,000 words a minute!

Again you may be one of those who excuse themselves by quoting the old adage, "Slow, but sure." If you are, be assured that the expression does not accurately describe the facts. You need not continue to read slowly for the reason that to do so will increase your comprehension.

In the third place, you may be a poor reader because you have never distinguished reading for general information and for pleasure from studying. More than 300 years ago Francis Bacon, in his famous sentence about tasting, swallowing, chewing and digesting books, made the point that all books are not to be read in the same manner. Explaining more fully, Bacon added, "That is, some Books are to be read only in Parts; Others to be Read but not Curiously; And some Few to be read wholly, and with Diligence and Attention." Nevertheless, American colleges and universities enroll annually many students who have only one technique by which to attack a book. Yet there are more speeds forward in reading than there are on a modern automobile, not excluding the overdrive. Low gear, intended for use when the going is hard, when the road is rough and steep, when there's a dangerous curve or intersection, when the traffic is congested, is not the gear for the open road, when the main purpose is to reach a definite objective while one enjoys himself along the way. Low gear is the study gear. Meticulous care and detail must be observed. Mastery is the objective, no matter how strange or how intricate the material may be. The technique of outlining, or of summarizing, or of seeking key words, or of locating topic sentences, these and others must be employed to the extent of mastering the thought content and of putting it in a succinct form to be retained.

Reading for information or pleasure—not to mention skimming, the overdrive of reading—demands a faster speed than can be secured in low gear. Here you do not read with any idea of making outlines or of writing summaries. Rather, selecting a book which is at once worth while and interesting, you set your mind to determine its central thought and its main subordinate ideas. And you are off on a pleasant reading journey with a definite objective. You must distinguish *reading* for general information and for pleasure from *study*, wherein mastery of the material is the goal.

In addition to these psychological handicaps, there are physiological factors which may greatly retard your rate of reading. A fundamental consideration is your vision. You are equipped with two human cameras which must function together as one and which must be able to respond rapidly and accurately over sustained periods of time. It is not uncommon to find from 25 to 30 per cent of an entering college class impeded by visual defects which interfere with proficient reading. Don't take chances. If there is the slightest doubt about your vision, consult your eye specialist.

Equipped with a pair of good eyes, you must then consider the activities of your eyes during the reading process. Your eyes move along the line of print in starts and stops. You do not see while your eyes are in motion; you see only when your eyes are at rest (during a fixation). Hence your rate of reading depends largely upon the frequency and the duration of fixation periods. The frequency of fixations is determined by the length of the perceptual span; that is, how much of a line of print the eyes take in when they pause to photograph. To gain speed, it is necessary to develop the habit of extending the length of the span and of reducing the period of fixation. One who makes twice the required number of pauses and lingers twice as long as is necessary will find himself hopelessly surpassed by a competent reader. Other faulty eye movements are regressions (glancing back along the line being read) and inadequate return sweep (failure of the eye to swing back unerringly to the beginning of the line below the one just read). The rate of reading, then, depends upon the speed of movement of the eyes, the length of the span, the duration of the fixation, the freedom from regressions, and the accuracy with which the eyes "hit the right place" when returning to the left side of the page for a new line. The good reader makes rapid rhythmic and progressive eye movements, with short fixations and long perceptual span.

A third consideration has to do with vocalization—a word used to include a number of oral reading habits (movement of the lips, tongue, and vocal cords) which are often taken over into silent reading activities. Physical considerations set the limits of speed of oral reading. Perhaps the late Floyd Gibbons, ace reporter and commentator of the first World War, could speak as rapidly as one possibly could and still have his thought conveyed fully and accurately to the listener. But Mr. Gibbons spoke only 217 words per minute in his radio broadcasts. How startlingly fast that is for oral reading; how painfully slow it is for adult silent reading! Reading at such a rate, you could cover only thirty-three pages an hour in *Captain Blood* or *Moby Dick*. And as for reading *Gone with the Wind* —well, that would take you nearly three weeks if you read for two hours daily.

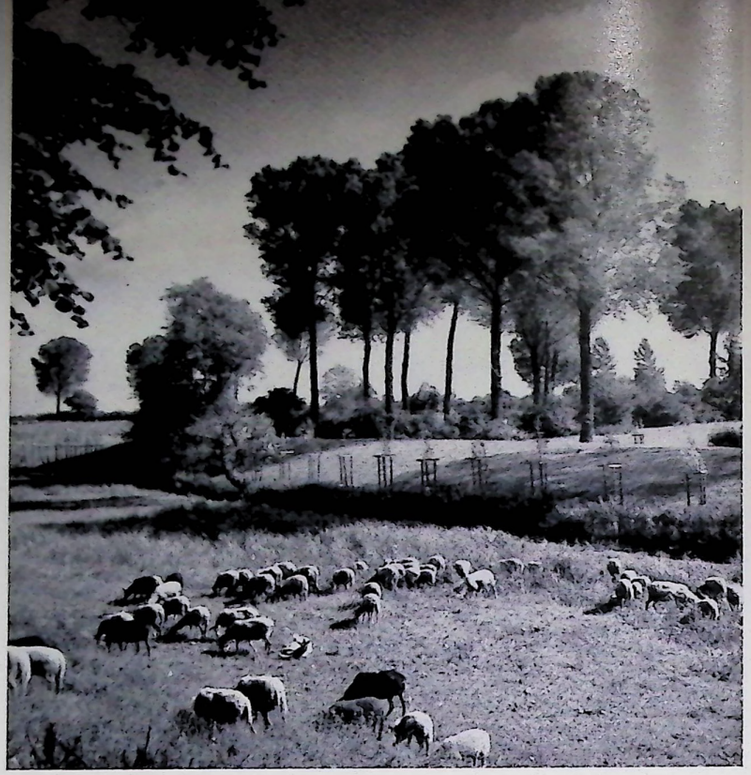
In silent reading the movements of your lips, tongue, and vocal cords must be eliminated or greatly suppressed if you wish to be other than a slow reader. Conscious effort on your part will do much to overcome any faulty habits which you may have acquired. You may even resort to holding some object in your mouth or chewing gum. No one can articulate words with his mouth hanging open, or with it engaged in the act of chewing. (Certainly, you should not persist in these techniques until you supplant a bad habit with a bad habit.) In addition to the elimination of lip and tongue movements, the vibration of the vocal cords should decrease greatly when you change from oral reading to silent reading. Perhaps this vibration cannot be entirely prevented when one reads or thinks, but by the conscious practice of reading rapidly much interesting and relatively easy material, you can so reduce these movements of the vocal cords that they will not interfere with the development of a normal reading rate.

The habit of looking at each word separately, as if to overlook one would be a sin, is another cause of slow reading. Whatever may have brought about this habit, the practice of plodding word by word across a line of print is wholly unnecessary. It interferes with both comprehension and rate. Thus the words "by," "the," and "sea," each have meanings of their own, but the phrase "by the sea" has more meaning than the single words. Such phrases as "in the long run" or "down and out" must be read as units or their meaning cannot be understood. You can learn to recognize phrases and to read many of them as units. The sooner you achieve this habit, the better—both for your speed and for your comprehension.

Finally, remember that no matter how old you are, or how well you read, you can *always* improve. The degree of speed, accuracy, and enjoyment possible in reading has practically no upper limits. Stick-to-itiveness and correct practice are the essentials. ♦

THE SABBATH

its meaning for modern man



by Abraham Joshua Heschel

HE WHO WANTS TO ENTER THE HOLINESS OF THE DAY must first lay down the profanity of clattering commerce, of being yoked to toil. He must go away from the screech of dissonant days, from the nervousness and fury of acquisitiveness and the betrayal in embezzling his own life. He must say farewell to manual work and learn to understand that the world has already been created and will survive without the help of man. Six days a week we wrestle with the world, wringing profit from the earth; on the Sabbath we especially care for the seed of eternity planted in the soul. The world has our hands, but our soul belongs to Someone Else. Six days a week we seek to dominate the world, on the seventh day we try to dominate the self.

In defense of the Sabbath, Philo, the spokesman of the Greek-speaking Jews of Alexandria, says: "On this day we are commanded to abstain from all work, not because the law inculcates slackness. . . . Its object is rather to give man relaxation from continuous and unending toil and by refreshing their bodies with a regularly calculated system of remissions to send them out renewed to their old activities. For a breathing spell enables not merely ordinary people but athletes also to collect their strength with a stronger force behind them to undertake promptly and patiently each of the tasks set before them."

Here the Sabbath is represented not in the spirit of the Bible but in the spirit of Aristotle. According to the Stagirite, "we need relaxation, because we cannot work continuously. Relaxation, then, is not an end"; it is "for the sake of activity," for the sake of gaining strength for new efforts. To the biblical mind, however, labor is the means toward an end, and the Sabbath as a day of rest, as a day of abstaining from toil, is not for the purpose of recovering one's lost strength and becoming fit for the forthcoming labor. The Sabbath is a day for the sake of life. Man is not a beast of burden, and the Sabbath is not for the purpose of enhancing the efficiency of his work. "Last in creation, first in intention," the Sabbath is "the end of the creation of heaven and earth." The Sabbath is not for the sake of the weekdays; the weekdays are for the sake of Sabbath. It is not an interlude but the climax of living.

Three acts of God denoted the seventh day: He rested, He blessed and He hallowed the seventh day (Genesis 2: 2-3). To the prohibition of labor is, therefore, added the blessing of delight and the accent of sanctity. Not only the hands of man celebrate the day, the tongue and the soul keep the Sabbath. One does not talk on it in the same manner in which one talks on weekdays. Even thinking of business or labor should be avoided.

Labor is a craft, but perfect rest is an art. It is the result of an accord of body, mind and imagination. To attain a degree of excellence in art, one must accept its discipline, one must abjure slothfulness. The seventh day is a *palace in time* which we build. It is made of soul, of joy and reticence. In its atmosphere, a discipline is a reminder of adjacency to eternity. Indeed, the splendor of the day is expressed in terms of *abstentions*, just as the mystery of God is more adequately conveyed *via negationis*, in the categories of *negative theology* which claims that we can never say what He is, we can only say what He is not. We often feel how poor the edifice would be were it built exclusively of our rituals and deeds which are so awkward and often so obtrusive. How else express glory in the presence of eternity, if not by the silence of abstaining from noisy acts? These restrictions utter songs to those who know how to stay at a palace with a queen.

There is a word that is seldom said, a word for an emotion almost too deep to be expressed: the love of the Sabbath. The word is rarely found in our literature, yet for more than two thousand years the emotion filled our songs and moods. It was as if a whole people were in love with the seventh day. Much of its spirit can only be understood as an example of love carried to the extreme. As in the chivalric poetry of the Middle Ages, the "underlying principle was that love should always be absolute, and that the lover's every thought and act should on all occasions correspond with the most extreme feelings or sentiments or fancies possible for a lover."

"Love, with the troubadours and their ladies, was a source of joy. Its commands and exigencies made life's supreme law. Love was knighthood's service; it was loyalty and devotion; it was the

noblest human giving. It was also the spring of excellence, the inspiration of high deeds." Chivalric culture created a romantic conception of adoration and love that to this day dominates in its combination of myth and passion the literature and mind of Western man.

What is so luminous about a day? What is so precious to captivate the hearts? It is because the seventh day is a mine where spirit's precious metal can be found with which to construct the palace in time, a dimension in which the human is at home with the divine; a dimension in which man aspires to approach the likeness of the divine.

For where shall the likeness of God be found? There is no quality that space has in common with the essence of God. There is not enough freedom on the top of the mountain; there is not enough glory in the silence of the sea. Yet the likeness of God can be found in time, which is eternity in disguise.

The art of keeping the seventh day is the art of painting on the canvas of time the mysterious grandeur of the climax of creation: as He sanctified the seventh day, so shall we. The love of the Sabbath is the love of man for what he and God have in common. Our keeping the Sabbath day is a paraphrase of His sanctification of the seventh day.

What would be a world without Sabbath? It would be a world that knew only itself or God distorted as a thing or the abyss separating Him from the world; a world without the vision of a window in eternity that opens into time.

For all the idealization, there is no danger of the idea of the Sabbath becoming a fairy-tale. With all the romantic idealization, the Sabbath remains a concrete fact, a legal institution and a social order. There is no danger of its becoming a disembodied spirit, for the spirit of the Sabbath must always be in accord with actual deeds, with definite actions and abstentions. The real and the spiritual are one, like body and soul in a living man. It is for the law to clear the path; it is for the soul to sense the spirit.

This is what the ancient rabbis felt: the Sabbath demands all of man's attention, the service and single-minded devotion of total love. The logic of such a conception compelled them to enlarge constantly the system of laws and rules of observance. They sought to ennoble human nature and make it worthy of being in the presence of the royal day.

The Sabbath is the most precious present mankind has received from the treasure house of God. All week we think: The spirit is too far away, and we succumb to spiritual absenteeism, or at best we pray: Send us a little of Thy spirit. On the Sabbath the spirit stands and pleads: Accept all excellence from me. . .

Yet what the spirit offers is often too august for our trivial minds. We accept the ease and relief and miss the inspirations of the day, where it comes from and what it stands for.

To observe the Sabbath is to celebrate the coronation of a day in the spiritual wonderland of time, the air of which we inhale when we "call it a delight."

Call the Sabbath a delight: a delight to the soul and a delight to the body. The Sabbath is not dedicated exclusively to spiritual goals. It is a day of the soul as well as of the body; comfort and pleasure are an integral part of the Sabbath observance. Man in his entirety, all his faculties must share its blessing.

To observe the seventh day does not mean merely to obey or to conform to the strictness of a divine command. To observe is to celebrate the creation of the world and to create the seventh day all over again, the majesty of holiness in time, "a day of rest, a day of freedom," a day which is like "a lord and king of all other days," a lord and king in the commonwealth of time.

How should we weigh the difference between the Sabbath and the other days of the week? When a day like Wednesday arrives, the hours are blank, and unless we lend significance to them, they remain without character. The hours of the seventh day are significant in themselves; their significance and beauty do not depend on any work, profit or progress we may achieve.

Time is like a wasteland. It has grandeur but no beauty. Its strange, frightful power is always feared but rarely cheered. Then we arrive at the seventh day, and the Sabbath is endowed with a felicity which enraptures the soul, which glides into our thoughts with a healing sympathy. It is a day on which hours do not oust one another. It is a day that can soothe all sadness away.

No one, even the unlearned, the crude man, can remain insensitive to its beauty. "Even the unlearned is in awe of the day." It is virtually impossible, the ancient rabbis believed, to tell a lie on the sacred Sabbath day.

What does the word "Sabbath" mean? According to some it is the name of the Holy One. Since the word *Shabbat* is a name of God, one should not mention it in unclean places. Some people were careful not to take it in vain.

The seventh day is like a palace in time with a kingdom for all. It is not a date but an atmosphere.

It is not a different state of consciousness but a different climate; it is as if the appearance of all things somehow changed. The primary awareness is one of our being *within* the Sabbath rather than of the Sabbath being within us. We may not know whether our understanding is correct, or whether our sentiments are noble, but the air of the day surrounds us like spring which spreads over the land without our aid or notice.

The difference between the Sabbath and all other days is not to be noticed in the physical structure of things, in their spatial dimension. Things do not change on that day. There is only a difference in the dimension of time, in the relation of the universe to God. The Sabbath preceded creation and the Sabbath completed creation; it is all of the spirit that the world can bear. It is a day that ennobles the soul and makes the body wise.

The words: "On the *seventh* day God *finished* His work" (Genesis 2: 2), seem to be a puzzle. Is it not said: "He *rested* on the *seventh* day"? "In *six* days the Lord made heaven and earth" (Exodus 20: 11)? We would surely expect the Bible to tell us that on the sixth day God finished His work. Obviously, the ancient rabbis concluded, there was an act of creation on the seventh day. Just as heaven and earth were created in six days, *menuha* was created on the Sabbath.

"After the six days of creation — what did the universe still lack? *Menuha*. Came the Sabbath, came *menuha*, and the universe was complete."

"What was created on the seventh day? *Tranquility, serenity, peace* and *repose*."

To the biblical mind *menuha* is the same as happiness and stillness, as peace and harmony. The word with which Job described the state after life he was longing for is derived from the same root as *menuha*. It is the state wherein man lies still, wherein the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. It is the state in which there is no strife and no fighting, no fear and no distrust. The essence of good life is *menuha*. "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want, He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters" (the waters of *menuhot*). In later times *menuha* became a synonym for the life in the world to come, for eternal life.

The meaning of the Sabbath is to celebrate time rather than space. Six days a week we live under the tyranny of things of space; on the Sabbath we try to become attuned to *holiness in time*. It is a day on which we are called upon to share in what is eternal, to turn from the results of creation to the mystery of creation; from the world of creation to the creation of the world. ♦

TROUBLES ARE TEACHERS

by Clarence E. Macartney

THERE ARE ALL KINDS OF TROUBLES. Troubles of the mind, troubles of the body, troubles of the heart, financial troubles, business troubles, domestic troubles. Troubles come, but they come without our choosing. No man is permitted to select either his own trouble or his own burden.

In a celebrated essay Joseph Addison tells of a remarkable dream he had. The ruler of the world had issued a proclamation that every mortal should bring his troubles and his sorrows and his burdens and throw them down on the plain in a heap. Led on by Fancy, the whole army of mankind marched to the plain where each man threw down his trouble and burden until the pile reached to the heavens. Then a second proclamation was made that everyone would be permitted to exchange his burden for one of the others heaped up on the plain. The deluded mortals rushed into the most foolish and absurd bargains; but in a short time the whole plain was filled with lamentation and murmuring, for those who had selected their burden discovered that their last state was worse than their first. The ruler of the world then gave a third command, ordering them to lay down their burdens again so that each could resume his own. When that was done, phantom Fancy disappeared, and a new figure, the goddess of Patience, stood by the mountain of Misery, which straightway sank to such a degree that it did not seem a third the size it was before. Each man resumed his old burden, well pleased that the burden which had fallen to his lot had not been left to his own choice. This is a good thing to remember when you are cast down by your trouble and think that almost any other trouble would be easier for you to bear.

The troubles which come to us are of three kinds. There are, first of all, those troubles which belong to life as such. These troubles come because, as Job said, "Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward." These are the misfortunes, the trials, and the afflictions which come to us in life—sickness and sorrow and disappointment—over which neither we ourselves nor any other men have control. Then there are the troubles which are brought upon men by the evil that other men do, and what a vast amount of that kind of evil there is! Then there is still a third class of troubles, the troubles which spring out of our own folly and our own sin and for which we are directly and solely responsible.

But whether it be trouble which comes upon us because we live here in this world—troubles which are inseparable from living, "acts of God" as the seamen call them—or trouble that is brought upon us by others, or trouble which springs out of our own folly and sinfulness, there is no trouble which comes to us save by the permission of God. That is the first thing to remember about trouble. If you are going to conquer your trouble, that is where you must start.

If, then, God permits trouble to come upon us, there must be some good and definite purpose which he has in mind. "God makes no mistakes." That was what a man who had been passing through deep trouble said to me one day. Were we to admit that God, as the Ruler of the Universe, makes mistakes, then God would be unseated on his throne. A man might make mistakes, but not God. This is where we must begin.

Since God permits trouble and therefore must have some good purpose in letting trouble come upon us, what are some of those wise and good purposes that God has in mind for you and me? One is that trouble is a part of God's great plan for us in this world. There is a splendid word that has dropped out of religious teaching and preaching today, the word "probation." The parables of the talents and the pounds teach the truth of individual responsibility and accountability to God. But they teach also the truth that we are being prepared in this life for higher things. Those who were found faithful over a few things were made ruler over many things.

In that great chapter in the book of Deuteronomy, God, through Moses, told the people to remember all the way that He had led them during those 40 years in the wilderness. The purpose, He said, was to humble them, to prove them, to know what was in their heart, whether they would keep His commandments or not. He told them to look back and remember *all* the way He had led them; to remember the blessings—the Red Sea opened for them, the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night, the manna from heaven, the water out of the rock—and their trials and tribulations and the punishment which came upon them. That life is a trial, a probation, is the only key which fits the lock of human experience. If life is for pleasure, how quickly the flowers of pleasure wither. If life is for knowledge, knowledge shall pass away. If life is for fame or power, how much power or fame has a man who lies in his grave? But if life is for building up moral character, for bringing us into fellowship with God, for teaching obedience to God, then life is, "just the stuff to try the soul's strength on."

God's ways are often deep, and therefore the manner in which any particular trouble is working good for us we may not know. But we trust God where we cannot see. The French mathematician and philosopher and great Christian, Blaise Pascal, in his justly celebrated *Thoughts* gives an excerpt from a letter which he wrote to an afflicted friend. Instead of the stock phrases of condolence and sympathy, he asked his friend to remember that this sorrow or trial had come to her by the permission of God and that by His appointment it had come at such a time in her life and in such a way. Hence he asked her to remember that what had happened was not by chance or accident but by divine appointment, and invited her to unite her will with the will of God and so will for herself and in herself that which God in His wisdom had willed for her.

At the end of his *Republic* Plato tells the story of a Greek soldier, Erus. He had fallen in battle, and his body, seemingly lifeless, had been piled up with the others to be burned. When he recovered consciousness, he related that between the time he fell wounded on the field of battle and came to on the funeral pyre, he had been transported into the future world. In that vision of the future world, he saw men judged, the wicked condemned, and the righteous rewarded. After a period of years those who had been sent to the lower regions and punished and those who came down from Heaven were given an opportunity to commence life over again. Lachesis, the Daughter of Necessity, let them choose their own lot out of those which she cast down on the plain before them. Some strange choices were made, but the *worst* choices were made by those who came down from Heaven and had never experienced trouble or profited by life's experience. Those who came up from the earth and the lower regions were more careful in their choices. Life's trials fit us to choose the things of excellence.

Another wise purpose of God in the afflictions which He permits to come upon us is that we ourselves may be fitted to bless and comfort others. I like that verse in the Eighty-fourth Psalm which tells how those who pass through the valley of Baca, which means "weeping," make it a well. The troubles of life give you an opportunity to turn the valley of Baca into a well, into springs of water which shall refresh others.

Our troubles teach us our unity with all mankind. One of the British soldiers who passed through the terrible ordeal of Dunkirk was asked by a friend when he got back safe to England, "What did it feel like, out there on that beach at Dunkirk, with the sea in front of you, the German army back of you, and the German bombers over you?"

His answer was, "It was a strange feeling I had. I felt that every man on the beach was my brother!" ♦

THE PLEASURES OF LAZINESS

by Fred C. Kelly

FROM CHILDHOOD WE HEAR our elders talk about lazy people as if laziness were ignoble, whereas the truth is that except for our lazy men there would be no progress and the lives even of energetic persons would be filled with drudgery. When a little girl helping her mother to clear away the dinner dishes sensibly carries a large tray-load to eliminate more trips, the mother chidingly observes: "Lazy man's load!" and the child thinks she has done something wrong. After a few reprimands of that sort, she falls into the habit of squandering her energies by needless steps until by the time she is grown she wears the world-weary expression so characteristic of housewives who imagine that laziness is a curse. Most women, it may be noted, show their age sooner than men, doubtless because the average woman is less lazy than her husband and doesn't mind ten steps where one or two would be enough. She would rather be conventionally tired than intelligently lazy.

The lazy waiter in a restaurant is always the most satisfactory and best. He brings everything that the diner will need *the first trip* because he regards every extra step as an abomination. It is the energetic waiter who brings coffee but no sugar or spoon and doesn't object to unnecessary journeys to fetch these while the coffee grows cold. Not being lazy, he feels no incentive to save steps and at the same time give prompt, intelligent service.

Nearly all progress in human affairs must have been due to the contrivings of lazy men to save themselves steps. When our early kinfolk lived in rude caves, every time a man desired a drink of water he had to walk to the spring. Presently some lazy fellow, tiring of so many trips to quench his thirst, must have fashioned a rude pail in which he could bring home a day's supply all at once. But even carrying a bucket of water is not pleasant, if one is lazy enough, and the next step was doubtless to hew troughs by which water could be diverted from the spring direct to the cabin of the consumer. A later achievement of the lazy man, to avoid carrying his water *up* a hill, was a pump and windmill. Similarly, the first boat, consisting of a hollow log, must have been born of the desire of one of our ancestors to avoid walking around the lake or along the bank of the river.

More than one hundred years ago, so the story goes, a lad, Humphrey Potter, was hired to sit alongside of a crude steam engine and let out the exhaust steam, or something or other, after each stroke of the driving rod. Being lazy, he found his task tiresome and rigged up some strings and latches by which the valves could be opened and shut automatically. This not only permitted him to run and play or sit by a brook, but also immediately doubled the capacity of the engine. He had lazily discovered the principle of reciprocating valves.

We have agricultural machinery *with seats*. These were not first thought of by energetic farmers who didn't mind walking all day, but by those to whom the idea of sitting down had a strong appeal. True, inventors often devise labour-saving machines that they themselves would never have occasion to use. A bookkeeper may fashion an improved farm implement. But he does this because he knows that there are always plenty of lazy men who will be interested in avoiding effort, and that he can make money by selling his patented labour-saving article to others. The money thus acquired will enable him to live *without working so hard* at his bookkeeping. Thus it is laziness that prompts his inventive effort. He can save himself from toil by saving others.

A great industrial engineer and student of human motions, frequently makes moving pictures of expert workmen in various trades, to determine how few different movements are needed in performing a given task. He finds that the best worker—that is, the one from whom others can learn the most—is invariably a lazy man, willing to work only just hard enough to hold his job. He is too lazy to waste a single motion that he can avoid. The more energetic

man is far less efficient, because he doesn't mind squandering his energy in unnecessary movements. At the end of the day he is fatigued out of all proportion to the work done.

We often hear a man who makes a great commotion about his job spoken of approvingly as a hustler. But the average hustler never outgrows taking orders from some more quiet fellow seated at a desk in the main office. Most great executives are lazy. It is logical that they should be. A good executive is one who never does anything that he can get anybody else to do for him. Only years of laziness can establish in a man the habit of having others wait on him or do things for him, instead of briskly doing them himself. Napoleon was notoriously indolent at school, his biographers tell us, and never did anything that he could contrive to delegate to others. Thus did he lay the foundations for leadership. He was not the kind ever to perform a military chore that could be done by an assistant.

Whether in an executive or an individual capacity, it is a tremendous asset to be lazy enough willingly to sit still until a bright idea comes along, instead of frittering away the golden hours in wearying routine activity. The best books are written necessarily by lazy authors. Too energetic an author pants to be up and doing and cannot content himself at a desk calmly improving his manuscript or idly waiting hours at a time for a bright phrase or a clever twist of plot. Many of our greatest statesmen were brought up on farms and would have remained on farms if they hadn't been too lazy to face so much hard work and looked about for something easier. It is the scholars and thinkers too lazy for much physical activity who do most to change the thought of the world for the better.

Moreover, mental laziness appears to be equally advantageous. Most important rules and formulas have been arrived at by lazy men who were trying to make mental short cuts. The discoverers of the laws of gravitation and of falling bodies must have been lazy men tired of laboriously working out the explanations for each separate bit of phenomena. Think what a job it would be to determine how long it takes an apple to fall from the top limb of a tree, or for a cat to drop from a balloon a mile high, without actually trying it, if one had no law of falling bodies! For that matter, think of the complications and wearisome annoyance we should have in ordinary daily affairs if some lazy individual had not established the general rule that two and two are invariably four!

Most men of genius are lazy. Mark Twain did much of his best work while lying in bed. An astounding number of men who have achieved fame in thinking roles were so indolent in school that they were considered hopeless dullards and inevitable failures. Indeed, a formidable array of men whose names are listed in halls of fame owe their success to the fortunate circumstance of having been fired from school because of their laziness and aversion to work, before school had standardized them to a mould of mediocrity. They disliked school because they lacked the energy necessary to gain passing marks in half a dozen subjects.

Even a lazy student, however, doesn't wish to be entirely idle and is usually willing to pursue some *one subject* that excites his interest. In the long run, the specialist is the one who arrives. But a schoolmaster—particularly if he is energetic himself and out of sympathy with lazy pupils!—is sure to oppose such specialization. The consequence is that those who remain in school must scatter their efforts on so many subjects that they may never make a big success at any. Most pupils are not too lazy to conform to the teacher's wishes. Only the exceptionally lazy are lucky enough to be fired and thus gain an opportunity to specialize along the line of natural aptitudes.

Darwin doubtless would never have written his "Origin of Species" if he had been a star pupil in school, studying with equal energy whatever subject was set before him. He could not master any language, and when he left school his father was informed that the boy was below common standards of intellect. Sir Isaac Newton stood so low in his classes that he was taken out of school and sent to work on a farm. The world owes much to the fact that these men were—presumably—too lazy to attempt mastery of too many subjects. Sir Walter Scott lazily neglected his schoolwork to read quantities of poetry and fiction. Robert Fulton, inventor of the steamboat, stood low in his classes because he couldn't give thought to his studies and also to the subjects that really interested him. Samuel Johnson, Hegel, Byron, James Russell Lowell, Oliver Goldsmith, Goethe, Emerson, William Cullen Bryant, George Eliot, Thackeray, Gladstone—all were indolent and failures at school. So was Herbert Spencer.

Ibsen did not rise above the lowest grade in which he could possibly graduate. Curie, who with his wife discovered radium, got along so poorly that his parents had to take him out of school and employ a private tutor. Now, of course, there may have been various causes contributing to the failures of these men in their school days. But the biographers of nearly every one mention indolence as a conspicuous characteristic. Without this indolence there would have been a scattering of mental activities and consequent lack of that specialization which made for success. Both they themselves and the world at large profited by their laziness.

One of the great advantages of laziness is that it helps a worker to make more money. Whenever a man energetically tries to produce too much, the quality of his goods fails and then he is paid only the low rates that go with average routine output. But, reversing the process, when one is lazy enough to use a little thought about how to get along with less work, his salary is likely to increase.

Almost anybody can look about him and see examples of men profiting by their inherent antipathy to toil. Even so obvious a convenience as the telephone is used most effectively by lazy men. A hustling fellow in an office on the same floor with the man he wishes to see walks down the corridor to that man's office, sends in his card, is informed that Mr. So-and-so is in conference—which means that the man is chatting with a friend—and has to wait for three-quarters of an hour. He overlooks the fact that it is always easier, notwithstanding private secretaries, to get a man's ear by telephone than face to face. A busy executive may pause in a conference to answer the phone, when he would not go out to the front office to greet the same caller.

Because of the absurd prejudice against laziness, thousands of people stand when they might just as well be seated, and life becomes to them an endurance test instead of the pleasant experience it could be. Most bank tellers, clerks in stores, and scores of others whose work could be done seated, nevertheless are obliged to stand all day long for no reason except that a stupid custom, traceable partly to snobbery, demands it.

Did you ever stop to consider how many business enterprises could not exist except for lazy people? I do not refer to such obvious examples as taxicab lines. Think of the theatres and other places devoted to vicarious entertainment. Too energetic a person is not content to sit still for three hours, watching others do things. He would rather take active part in his entertainment. Professional baseball would cease except for the lazy spectators. Eighteen men play while a hundred thousand look on! At least two-thirds of all jewelry and ultra-fashionable clothing is sold to people too lazy to accomplish anything of consequence to satisfy their vanity, and obliged therefore to gain an artificial sense of self-importance by buying it in the form of trophies over a counter.

Lazy people, both those who get things done and those who do not, are the folk on whom progress must mainly depend. It is time that we lazy people were receiving the serious consideration that is our due. We comprise the hope of the race. ♦

THE HAPPY LIFE

by Lucius Annaeus Seneca

ALL MEN WISH TO LIVE HAPPILY, but are dull at perceiving exactly what it is that makes life happy: and so far is it from being easy to attain to happiness that the more eagerly a man struggles to reach it the further he departs from it, if he takes the wrong road.

Let us not therefore decide whither we must tend, and by what path, without the advice of some experienced person who has explored the region which we are about to enter, because this journey is not subject to the same conditions as others.

True happiness consists in not departing from nature and in molding our conduct according to her laws and model. A happy life is one which is in accordance with its own nature, and cannot be brought about unless in the first place the mind be sound and vigorous, enduring all things with most admirable courage suited to the times in which it lives, and must be able to enjoy the bounty of Fortune without becoming her slave.

A happy life consists in a mind which is free, upright, undaunted and steadfast beyond the influence of fear or desire. A man must be accompanied by a continual cheerfulness, a high happiness, which comes indeed from on high because he delights in what he has. If we attain to this, then there will dawn upon us those invaluable blessings, the repose of a mind that is at rest in a safe haven, its lofty imaginings, its great and steady delight at casting out errors and learning to know the truth, its courtesy and its cheerfulness, in all of which we shall take delight. ♦

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The Membership certificate of Honor should be made out in the name of:

Serial number if you are a subscriber _____

Please print name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zone _____ State _____

GIFT ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

The Membership Certificate of Honor should be made out in the name of:

Please print name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zone _____ State _____

Gift card should read: From _____

LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP

Please enroll me as a Lifetime Member of The Wisdom Society. I understand that Lifetime Membership is tax-deductible and entitles me to benefits and privileges of The Society, which include my receiving WISDOM MAGAZINE for life.

☐ Enclosed is my check (or money order) for $250

☐ Please bill me for $250

The Membership Certificate of Honor should be inscribed, and THE WISDOM MAGAZINE AWARD engraved in the name of:

Serial number if you are a subscriber _____

Please print name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zone _____ State _____

GIFT LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP

The Membership Certificate of Honor should be inscribed, and THE WISDOM MAGAZINE AWARD engraved in the name of:

Please print name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zone _____ State _____

Gift card should read: From _____

GIVE THIS CURRENT ISSUE AS A GIFT

I'm giving this current issue No. _____ as a gift.
(Be sure to indicate Issue Number.)

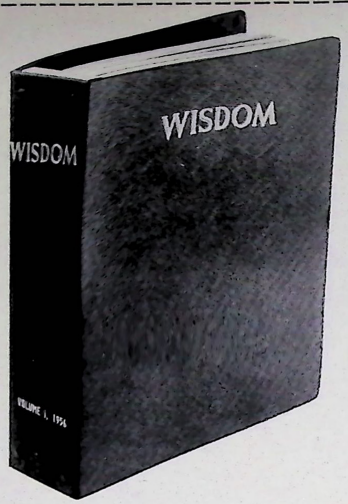
Please send to: Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zone _____ State _____

My gift card should read: From _____

You may order as many additional Current Issue Gifts as you wish. Just send us the names and addresses along with your check in the amount of $2 for each copy ordered if you are a Member of The Society ($3 if you are a Non-Member).



WISDOM BINDER

TO MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY
$5
postpaid
(a saving of $2.50 to Members)

TO NON-MEMBERS OF THE SOCIETY
$7.50
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In answer to many requests, we have designed a permanent binder of outstanding beauty to hold 12 issues of WISDOM.

It is made of heavy-weight washable, imitation-black-leather binding fabric. An individual wire-mechanism holds each copy securely in place. The binder is easy to open and close, and its hard covers will keep your copies of WISDOM in excellent condition. Order your binder today.

BINDER ORDER FORM

Please send me the binders I have checked ☐ Member ☐ Non-Member

☐ 1956 ☐ 1957 ☐ 1958 I am enclosing my check for $_____

Please print name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zone _____ State _____

A COMPLETE LIST OF WISDOM ISSUES IN PRINT AND IN CONSTANT DEMAND—Available for only $2 per copy to Members of The Society, ($3 to Non-Members), postage included.

Check the issues you want: ☐ Member ☐ Non-Member

☐ No. 2 ☐ No. 3 ☐ No. 4 ☐ No. 5 ☐ No. 6 ☐ No. 7
☐ No. 8 ☐ No. 10 ☐ No. 11 ☐ No. 12 ☐ No. 13 ☐ No. 15
☐ No. 16 ☐ No. 17 ☐ No. 18 ☐ No. 19 ☐ No. 21 ☐ No. 22
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A few rare, valuable copies are available at $10 each to Members of The Society ($15 to Non-Members). ☐ Member ☐ Non-Member

Please print name _____

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WISDOM STATUETTE OF THE THINKER

Available now to all readers of WISDOM: a special reproduction of the expensive model awarded annually by WISDOM to the world's greatest living men and women. It stands 9 ins. high, weighs 2 lbs. and is 6 ins. wide at the base. It is hand-carved in solid American walnut, with a hand-rubbed lacquer finish. Your money cheerfully refunded if you are not completely satisfied. *$35* to Members (*$50* to Non-Members).

Please send me the WISDOM Statuette of The Thinker

Enclosed is my check for $_____

Check one: ☐ Member ☐ Non-Member

Please print name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zone _____ State _____

We will gladly bill you for Membership, but check must accompany all other orders. Make check payable to: The Wisdom Society, 8800 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, Calif.

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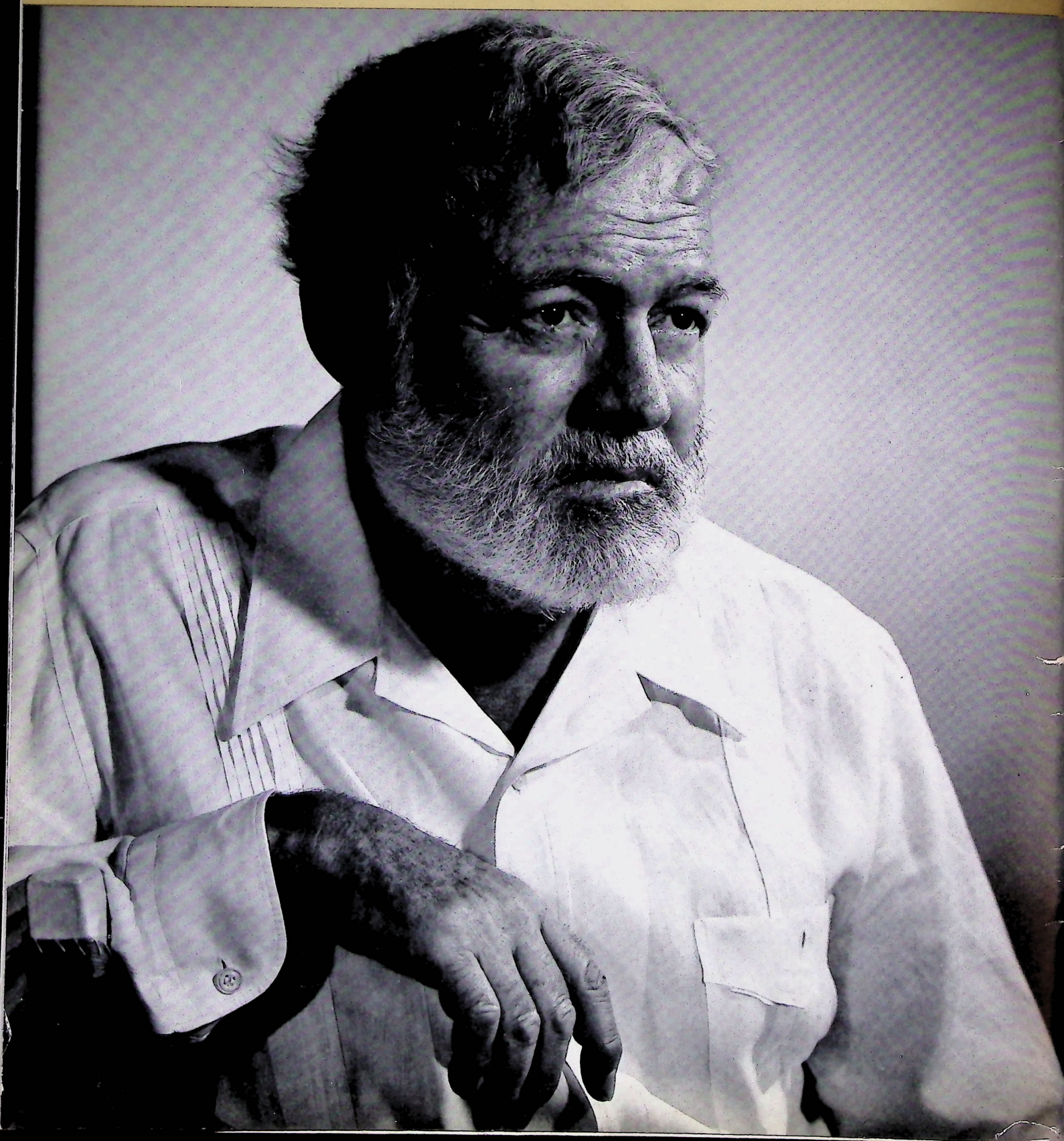
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